

JEEVADHARA

The Word of God

TERRESTRIAL REALITIES

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Editorial

The expression "terrestrial realities" is used in the present number of *Jeevadhara* in the most comprehensive sense, so as to include within its spectrum the rich variety of created things on the face of this earth. Man too, inasmuch as he is part of the world of creation, is a terrestrial reality, though he remains head and shoulders above every other created thing or being. At present there is everywhere a strong awareness of man's uniqueness and the right he has to use the good things of this life in order that he may become what God wants him to be, and the current issue of *Jeevadhara* endeavours to clarify what the Scriptures have to say about terrestrial realities and their significance.

The opening article deals with the biblical account of the origin of man and the world, which embodies a profound theological statement regarding the problem under consideration: the P and J traditions have their own specific points of view, which can be clarified only with the help of a detailed exegesis of the relevant passages.

The next article takes up Israel's wisdom tradition as exemplified in the book of Ecclesiastes. In opposition to the sages who are unanimous in teaching that the virtuous man will always be happy and the wicked unhappy, Qoheleth stresses the fact of experience that the good suffer and the impious prosper, and in this anomalous situation the best thing for a person to do is to enjoy life! Human existence is absurd, and when confronted by this tragedy let a man try to get the maximum joy out of life! The detailed account of the author's person and point of view should prepare the reader for the fruitful pursual of the second part of the study, and prevent him from taking offence at the Preacher's bold conclusions.

Jesus' views on the significance of terrestrial realities is the theme of the third contribution. Though his mission here on earth was not to propound a theory of terrestrial realities,

Jesus has at times, though only in passing, touched upon our problem, and his covert and overt statements on it are synthesized and discussed in the third article. The apocalyptic tradition of Judaism has had its impact on our Lord's evaluation of terrestrial realities, but this particular point has been left out of consideration, lest the study become unduly long.

The fourth contribution studies St. Paul's thought regarding the groaning of material creation (Rom. 8). The Apostle teaches that creation, which has been made subject to vanity, longs for deliverance from bondage; a deliverance which has its source in Christ's redemptive work. Not only man but also material creation will have a share in the great salvation God has effected in and through Christ, and in this lies the inner worth and value of the things of this world.

The last study is concerned with the traditions of India and Iran: the Aryans of antiquity had a positive view of terrestrial realities, and while the thought of the Vedas moves within the framework of naturalistic polytheism, that of the Gāthās of Zarathushtra (or Zoroaster) approaches very close to the position of the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures. Christians in India should be familiar not only with the Vedic tradition but also with the Gathic one, for then only will they have a comprehensive idea of the world view of the Aryans. The wholly negative, passive and fatalistic attitude towards this life is not at all in keeping with the earliest form of Indo-Iranian tradition, and the neglect of this tradition has contributed in no small degree to the degradation and poverty of the masses in India.

The contributors as well as the section editor are aware that their discussions are not adequate, for to do sufficient justice to the subject there is need of a bulky volume with studies on different aspects of the problem by specialists. However, in spite of their limitations, the studies in the current issue, it is hoped, will help the reader to have some grasp in depth of the biblical teaching on terrestrial realities and their significance in the history of salvation.

The Biblical Account of Creation and Terrestrial Realities

While describing the ideal state of affairs under king Solomon, the author of 1 Kg. 4:20 notes how the people of Judah and Israel, who were as numerous as the sand by the sea, were eating and drinking and rejoicing;¹ it is pointed out too how Judah and Israel dwelt in security, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, of course partaking merrily of their produce (1 Kg. 5:5). A positive attitude towards terrestrial realities comes to the forefront in these two passages, an attitude that has its roots in Israel's faith in God the creator. We shall, in the first part of our study, see what the P account of creation has to say about the inner significance of terrestrial realities;² in the second part our endeavour shall be to clarify the J writer's theology of material progress, for while the P complex does not include any description of man's ascent on the ladder of progress, the J source shows itself most interested in this matter.

I

It has been pointed out that in the P account of creation man appears as the top-most point of a pyramid;³ what is hereby meant is that man is introduced by the P writers as the very crown of God's work of creation, but what is this terrestrial reality that we call man? The answer to this question is found

1. To the first two verbs there correspond in the Hebrew original two active participles and to the third an adjective indicating a state; the three forms serve, then, to indicate a permanent state of affairs.

2. To keep the present contribution within reasonable bounds, we shall not touch upon the position of terrestrial realities in the J version of the story of creation.

3. Cf. G. von Rad, *Genesis* (The Old Testament Library, Philadelphia, 1961), p. 75, where the following statement of a modern exegete is cited: In chapter 1 man is the pinnacle of a pyramid, in chapter 2 the centre of a circle."

in the following words of the sacred writer: "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness....' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen. 1: 26f.). To "man" there corresponds in the Hebrew original the term *'ādām* (562 times in the Hebrew Bible),⁴ a term that is of paramount importance and therefore deserves to be closely studied. The word has a number of meanings in the OT: (1) proper name, of persons (Gen. 4: 25. 5:1. 1 Chr. 1:1) as well as of places (Jos. 19:36); "man" as a *Gattungsbezeichnung* or type-designation, i. e., man in general, mankind; (3) "individuals" (Ps. 32: 2. Prv. 28: 17); (4) "human, in the human way" (2 Sam. 7:14. Hos. 11:4; (5) indefinite pronoun, "someone, somebody" (Lev. 1:2 etc.). The remarkable thing about the present noun is that it has no plural, its place being taken by the periphrastic constructions of "sons of men" (Gen. 11:5 etc.), or "daughters of men" (Gen. 6:2.4), and *'ānāsīm*, plural of *'īs*, "man, the male".⁵

In v. 26, *'ādām* is used as a type-designation, or, in the collective sense, i. e., "mankind", and it is not therefore to be understood as a proper name, as has traditionally been done, or as a definite singular (one man, one alone) or as an indefinite singular (someone, somebody). The word is the designation of a specific genus, viz, mankind, which is sharply distinguished by the P writer himself from the different genera of animals the story of whose origin has been narrated in the previous verses. In support of the collective understanding two facts may be adduced: first, there is the plural from of the verb "let them have dominion" (explained below); second, v. 27 has the plural *'otām*, "them" (cf. notes below).

The etymology of our term, which occurs too in Phoenician⁶,

4. For statistics, cf. F. Maass, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament* 1, col. 85.

5. Maass, *ibid.*, col. 82.

6. Z. S. Harris, *A Grammar of the Phoenician Language* (American Oriental Series 8, New Haven, Conn., 1936) p. 74; cf. too J. Friedrich-W. Röllig, *Phönizisch – punische Grammatik* (Analecta Orientalia. Commentationes scientificae de rebus orientis antiqui 46, 2nd ed., Rome, 1970) *passim*.

Ugaritic⁷, Arabic⁸, etc., is not clear. It has been connected with Sumerian AD, literally, "father"; since the meaning itself speak against the proposal, we need not dwell upon it any further. The normal Sumerogram for man is LU, which, however, had no influence upon the Hebrew language; the present remark is also true of *awīlu*, the common Accadian term for man as distinct from the gods and animals. There is too in Accadian the poetic expression *šalmat qaqqadi*, "black of head, black-head", which is a translation of Sumerian SAG. GI₆. GA.⁹ It would nevertheless seem that Accadian will give us some clue to the etymology and meaning of 'ādām.

Texts from the Old Accadian or Sargonic period¹⁰ attest the personal name *A-da-mu*. written also 'A-da-mu and *A-dam-mu*.¹¹ Albright has pointed out that one of the ancestors of Shamshi-Adad I of Assyria (1748-10) bore the name Adamu, and he thinks that this personage may have give rise to biblical Adam,¹² but such a correlation seems to be too far-fetched to

7. J. Aistleitner, *Wörterbuch der ugaritischen Sprache* (Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Phil. hist. kL. 106/3, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1965) no. 83.

8. H. Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (Wiesbaden, 1966) p. 10.

9. On this expression, cf. Luke, "The Double of the Gods Turned Blasphemer: Man in the Traditions of Mesopotamia," *Jeevadhara* 5(1975) mp. 102, n. 11; cf. too W. von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* III (Wiesbaden, 1974) p. 1077 f.

10. That is, the period around 2350-2160 B. C., when Mesopotamia was being ruled by the Semitic dynasty established by Sargon of Accad (2340-2284), and the form of Accadian in which the texts from this age are written is called Old Accadian; cf. I. J. Gelb, *Old Akkadian Writing and Grammar* (Materials for the Assyrian Dictionary 2, Chicago, 1961).

11. References in Gelb, *Glossary of Old Akkadian* (Materials . . . 3, 2nd impr. Chicago, 1973) p. 19.

12. W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan. A Historical Analysis of Two Contrasting Faiths* (Anchr Books, New York, 1969) p. 98, n. 119. Incidentally Adamu is described as living in tents (cf. n. 49 below).

be true. More relevant to our problem are the Accadian terms *adamu*, "red garment, blood", and *adamatu*, "dark, reddish mud, earth", corresponding to Hebrew ^a*dāmāh*, "soil, red arable soil, earth" (cf. Gen. 2:7). It is to be recalled here that in Hittite lexical texts *a-da-am-mu* is rendered *eshar-*, "blood".¹³ Finally there is in Hebrew the verbal root ^a*ādām*, "to be red, reddish", so that ^a*ādām* might very well be the reddish being, the creature with the reddish complexion; this etymology is a distinct possibility, though one cannot be cocksure about it.

"In our image, after our likeness": two expressions which admirably sum up all that the faith of Israel had to say about man, and which must therefore be minutely analysed. To the first phrase there corresponds in the original *b^ešalmēnū*, to be analysed as preposition *b^e* "in", plus the noun form *šalm* (in the construct state),¹⁴ plus *-nū*, the possessive suffix of the first person plural. The verbal base from which the substantive is derived is *šalama*,¹⁵ which is not found in Hebrew but occurs in Arabic with the meaning "to cut off, chop off" (ear, nose). Accadian too does not employ the verbal root, though it makes a copious use of the noun form *šalmu*,¹⁶ which has the meanings "statue, figure, figurine, image, copy," etc. It is at times used of man, thought of as the image or copy of the gods: thus the exorcist is called *ša-lam Marduk*, "image of Marduk," and the king *ša-al-mu sa DN*, "image which is of DN"! In Accadian

13. J. Friedrich, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch* (Indogermanische Bibliothek. 2. Reihe: Wörterbücher, Heidelberg, 1952) p. 43.

14. The construct state means that the noun in question stands in genitival relation with another word (substantive, pronominal suffix), and this state is to be distinguished from the absolute one where the noun stands independent of other words.

15. The present form represents the third person masculine singular of the simple stem in Proto-Semitic, which, in Hebrew, will become *šālam*; in Accadian grammars, etc. the custom is to cite bases according to the infinitive form, which, in the case of our root, will be *šalāmu*.

16. Cf. von Soden, *op. cit.*, pp. 1078 f.

texts where there is question of man's creation as a replica of the gods another word is used, a discussion of which need not be attempted here.¹⁷

In the OT *šaelaem* (17 times) is used of empty, transitory fantasies (Ps. 39: 7. 73: 20), of miniatures of mice and tumours (1 Sam. 6: 5. 11), of painted pictures of men (Ez. 23: 14), and especially of idols which may be graven or molten (Num. 33: 52. 2 Kg. 11: 8); in a quite realistic sense children are said to be the images of their parents (Gen. 5: 3), and finally according to the P writer man is in a special way the *imago Dei* (Gen. 1: 26. 27. 9: 6); we shall soon see in what sense the divine image in man is to be understood.

"After our likeness" is the rendering of *kidmâtēnû*, i. e., the preposition *ki*, plus the construct form of the noun *d^emât*, plus the possessive suffix *-nu*; the expression is evidently meant as a parallel to the one just discussed. The present noun form (21 times), derived from the root *dāmāh*,¹⁸ "to be like, similar, resemble", through the addition of the suffix *-ut*, is an abstract noun, though used in the concrete sense to denote something artistic and man-made (2 Kg. 16: 10. Ez. 23: 5). The meaning "semblance, appearance, figure, form", with emphasis on the element of vagueness, is well attested in contexts where there is question of God (Ez. 1: 5. 22. 26. 28), and in Gen. 1: 26 the word under study is concretely used of man (compare Gen. 5: 1. 3).

Of the two terms "image" and "likeness", the former is the more important one, since it is used alone in Gen. 1: 27 (and that too twice) and also in 9: 6. The purpose of adding "after our likeness" seems, then, to have been to put a limitation on the idea of sharing necessarily involved by the preposition "in" affixed to *imago*,¹⁹ and also to leave the notion of *imago* vague,

17. That is *zirku*; discussions in Luke, *op. cit.* (n. 9) p. 104, n. 19.

18. The root occurs too in Aramaic; Accadian and Arabic attest only derivative noun forms.

19. Grammarians recognize this point; a discussion of it cannot, however, be attempted here.

indefinite, and even mysterious. This becomes quite understandable when we remember that the P writer ever accentuates the fact of God's transcendence; in other words, he is issuing against taking the divine image in man too literally and materialistically.

Some exegetes think that man is the image not of God but of the celestial beings who constitute his court, and to substantiate this understanding they make appeal to Ps. 8 where man is said to be made a little less than the Elohim, "gods", with power over all creatures of the earth, the air and the waters (vv. 6-9). Now since in Ps. 138:1 the Elohim are evidently angels, it follows that the author of Ps. 8 is thinking of them, and not of Yahweh; accordingly in Gen. 1:26, where there is question of the heavenly court,²⁰ "our image" and "our likeness" can only mean man's similarity to the celestial beings surrounding the divine throne. This argument, however, is not sufficiently cogent, for in v. 27 there is the expression *b^ešalmô*, "in his image", where the meaning is beyond doubt.

To be decisively rejected for its one-sidedness is the view that man is God's image inasmuch as he possesses an immortal, spiritual soul. This understanding is based upon an anthropology which belittles the human body, and which is altogether alien to the traditions of the OT that visualize man as a body-person and holds the body in the highest regard. We say that the interpreter must take *imago Dei* in man concretely and dynamically; we shall now try to explain the point.

"Concretely" means man as he exists on the level of experience, or to use modern jargon, on the phenomenological level as a being wholly defined by the category of bodiliness. While thus visualizing the body-person as God's very image, the P writers are unconsciously being guided by the traditions of the prophets who in their visions happened to see Yahweh in human form. The most remarkable text in this connection is Ez. 1:26 where the prophet records that he saw the Lord on his throne in human gestalt, *d^emût k^emar'ê 'ādām*, "likeness as it were the appearance of man". Here we have a clear prelude to the P

20. On the celestial court, cf. Luke, *Israel before Yahweh. An Exposition of Selected Psalms* (Quilon, 1978) pp. 121-24.

writers' depiction of man as the image of God. We leave open the question whether the authors, as suggested by Ludwig Köhler,²¹ were also thinking of man's erect stature and gait, characteristics that add to his beauty and differentiate him from all other creatures.

The dynamic aspect of the divine image in man consists in his active and effective exercise of dominion over the whole world, as is clear from the command given by God (discussed below); the whole context demands that we take into account the injunction the creator has given to man to dominate and subdue the visible world, and there are two passages that lend weight to what we have said. The Philistine ruler Achish tells David that he is "good" in his eyes like an angel of Elohim (1 Sam. 29:9); David had done spectacular service to the king, a reference to which is inevitable in his words to the hero. The shrewd woman of Tekoa compliments David saying that he is wise like the angel of Elohim, evaluating good and evil (2 Sam. 14:17-20), i. e., in the exercise of his duties as ruler of Israel David is wise like the angel of God. There is the possibility that the speakers are thinking of celestial beings, but since wisdom is predicated of God and not of them,²² the likelihood is that the angel of God is God himself. In short, God has appointed man as his double here on earth, in much the same way as kings set up their *šalmu* "in the provinces of their empire where they do not personally appear."²³

An important aspect of the divine image in man, which is nowhere explicitly stated in Gen. 1, is his ability to enter freely into a relationship of faith and obedience to his creator, in other words, his capacity to respond positively to the gracious and gratuitous advances made to him by his lord and maker. Exegetes are agreed that in the story of man's creation there is taken for granted an implicit covenant inaugurated by

21. Cf. his study, "Die Grundstelle der Imago-Dei-Lehre," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 4(1948) pp. 16-22.

22. At times they are even accused of being without wisdom: "They have neither knowledge nor understanding" (Ps. 82:5); on this text, cf. Luke, *op. cit.*, passim.

23. Thus von Rad, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

God, and since the covenant bond, in the final analysis, is an offer of salvation, man has to respond to it positively and effectively through faith and love. As he thus reacts to God's initiative in his regard, he is entering into fellowship with the one who has given him being, a fellowship that is also an integral part of his existence here on earth.

In his capacity as God's image man should "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth... And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth'... And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:26-31).

"Let them have dominion": this is the rendering of a single word in the original, *yirdû* from the root *rādāh*, "to rule, dominate, exercise power."²⁴ The verb is found in contexts where there is question of the crushing of grapes by treading the wine press (Joel 4:13), of inflicting chastisement (Lam. 1:13), and of oppression (Lev. 25:33. Is. 14:6. Ez. 34:4). In a special way, however, it denotes the appointment of a person as superior or superintendent (1 Kg. 5:30), the king's effective exercise of rule over his foes (Ps. 110:2), and even dictatorial domination from which there is no escape (Ps. 49:15). The P writer envisages man as a monarch who possesses lordship over the whole of visible creation, and this peculiar point of view of his rests upon the Israelite belief that animals are meant for man (Gen. 1:29 f. 9:2f.).

God's words of blessing embody too the injunction "subdue it", in the original *kibsûhā*, imperative plural of the verb *kābas*, pointing to mankind at large, followed by the accusative suffix of the third person feminine singular referring to the earth which in Hebrew is feminine. The root, occurring too in Accadian,

24. Compare the Accadian cognate *radû*, "to drive, tend" (flock).

Arabic, etc., means "to tread down, press, rape" (Est. 7:8. Mic. 7:19); it also means the reducing of a person to the status of a slave (Neh. 5:5. 2 Chr. 28:10), and the subjugation of nations (2 Sam. 8:11). As he uses the present verb which involves even the use of violence and force with reference to man's work of manipulating the material world, the P writer, perhaps unconsciously, adopts an aggressive attitude to the whole of material creation. This is in marked contrast with the persuasion of the naturalistic religions of the ancient world that nature with its sequence of life, death and birth is something divine, that man, in order to find security and happiness, must get integrated into this process.²⁵ The biblical author is, then, affirming man's independence vis-à-vis nature, nay, his power over it.

In the section under scrutiny the Israelite writer is enunciating a veritable theology of terrestrial realities, which is sharply opposed on the one hand to the tendency to deify them and on the other to call into question their essential goodness and label them as diabolical, or even to deny their being altogether. Terrestrial realities are good in themselves inasmuch as they are created by God, and he has himself found how good they are. As they are part of the totality of creation, they are not divine, and since they are in themselves good, they cannot be something diabolical or evil; they are meant essentially for the use of man who is God's own image here on earth. It has been pointed out above that the story of creation takes for granted the existence of an implicit covenant, and for man to be able to carry out its stipulations, the creator must personally provide him with his daily bread. For the believer to be able to say, "Hallowed be thy name", God must first fulfil the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread"!

God's words of blessing, in the final analysis, demand that man try his level best to create conditions of existence on the

25. H. Frankfurt, *Kingship and the Gods* (6th impr., Chicago, 1969) has pointed out this specific feature of ancient oriental religions; his monumental work carries the significant subtitle *A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Inegration of Society and Nature*.

face of this earth which will make it possible for him to carry out with ease the divine will in his regard. When in the last century Christian ministers were exhorting the poor in their parishes to bear patiently with the inhuman exploitation to which they were subjected by their employers – a thing that made Marx brand religion as the opium of the poor masses –, they were going counter to the teaching of the Scriptures. It goes without saying that biblical teaching is against the passive acceptance of the dehumanizing *status quo* as part of God's will.²⁶

Let us now try to understand the position that Gen. 1:28 occupies within the totality of biblical faith. The religion of Israel was the synthesis of a rich variety of traditions, and to which of these does the present verse belong? It belongs to the complex of Israel's wisdom traditions,²⁷ or more specifically to that strand which comes so remarkably to expression in Qoheleth's statement, "He has made everything appropriate to its time and put 'ôlām into their hearts, without man's ever discovering... the work which God has done" (3i11).²⁸ God has made everything *yāpaeh*. "beautiful,"²⁹ and has left it to man to fathom the mystery of time that keeps everything hidden under

26. Preoccupation with the safeguarding of the *status quo* arises from the absence of the historical sense: history is the onward movement to a better future, and this awareness has its roots in faith in God the creator. We may note here in passing that when the poor in India accept their miserable lot as the outcome of their karma, or when exploiters appeal to the same doctrine to justify their deeds of injustice, they are turning religion into a dehumanizing opium.

27. This is well brought out by W. Zimmerli, "Ort und Grenze der Weisheit im Rahmen der alttestamentlichen Theologie," *Les sagesses du Proche-Orient ancien* (colloque de Strassbourg, 17–19 mai 1962, Paris, 1963) pp. 121–36.

28. Discussions in J. Chamakala, Qoheleth's Reflections on Time," *Jeevadhara* 7 (1977) pp. 117–31.

29. It is difficult to say why Qoheleth who in the present passage is following the tradition of the P writers, uses "beautiful" instead of "good." The Hebrew base cited in the text is used of men ("handsome;" cf. Gen. 39:6), women ("bèautif-ful;" cf. Gen. 12:14), the eyes (1 Sam. 16:12), trees, etc.

a veil. The meaning of *‘ôlām* is not clear, though the likelihood is that it signifies man's ignorance of the right time.³⁰ The Preacher, a most original thinker who does not follow the conventions of the sages, agrees with the traditional view that man has to probe into God's work of creation, but expresses disagreement with the generally accepted thesis that this endeavour will yield fruit. Against the general background of the special tradition represented by the teachers of wisdom in Israel must, then, we interpret the P writer's record of God's command to subdue the earth even with the use of force.

There is too another line of wisdom tradition in the rear of v. 28, one which is so admirably summed up by the touching prayer found in Prv. 30: 7-9. The author, who is a sage, earnestly wishes to be preserved from utter penury and excessive riches, two extreme situations which are equally fraught with danger, and therefore his request to God is to provide him with the food that he needs. Once God does this, he will be in a position to pursue wisdom and thus find happiness. And Gen. 1:28 contains the answer God has given to the prayer for daily bread.

In this context we must not fail to recall that from the vantage point of biblical revelation, the great advances science has made during the past centuries or so are man's positive and concrete act of obedience to God's command to subdue the universe. It is remarkable that until recently all the discoveries of science were confined to those parts of the globe which were in possession of the Judaeo-Christian culture, and the factor that has contributed most to the rise of science in this particular cultural milieu has been the influence of the Bible with its emphasis on man's obligation to exercise dominion over the material world. One cannot, at this juncture, lose sight of the evils that modern technology has brought in its train, but they are really the outcome of man's selfishness, and not the result of God's will in man's regard.

The concluding verse of Gen. 1. states that God had a good look at everything that he had made, and it is "very good."

30. Different views in Chamakala, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-30.

With regard to this evaluation two things are to be noted. First, in the original the exclamatory particle *hinnēh*, "lo, behold," precedes the phrase under study; the word has a demonstrative force and points to things or persons present there and then, in the very vicinity of the speaker, and even to events that are taking place or have just taken place. It may be used with the pronominal suffix³¹ or independently as in the present verse, and in either case it signifies something extraordinary, unusual, spectacular. Second, the goodness of the creator's work is highlighted with the help of *m^eôd*, a substantive used adverbially and ultimately derived from the Proto-Semitic root *ma'ada*, which, by the way, survives in Accadian with the meanings "to be / become much," etc.; cf. too the adjective *mādu*, "much," etc.³² Hebrew *m^eôd* is a fairly frequent noun (300 times) and attests the meanings "muchness, force, abundance", and as an adverb its signification is "exceedingly". To intensify the idea conveyed by it, Hebrew writers have even created the phrase *m^eôd m^eôd*, "exceedingly exceedingly, most exceedingly" (Gen. 7: 19. 17: 2). Man's work of exercising dominion over the whole of the material world has also been seen by the creator, and it too is included in the evaluation of terrestrial realities occurring in Gen. 1: 31. We bring this section to a close with the remark that the religious traditions of the Sumerians and Accadians do not have anything comparable to the positive evaluation of the material world – of terrestrial realities – occurring in the first account of creation.

II

The J source too in its own way teaches that man is the lord of the visible world, and even after describing the tragedy that befell man, it is careful to point out how descendants of Adam gradually began to develop different modes of life, arts and crafts. Gen. 4 is in point of fact the Yahwist's

31. Examples in Luke, *Studies on the Book of Genesis* (Pontifical Institute Publications 21, Alwaye, 1975) p. 206, n. 14.

32. Cf. von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* II (Wiesbaden, 1972) p. 573.

account of the evolution of culture: agricultural and pastoral economies are represented by Cain and Abel, inasmuch as the former tills the soil and the latter herds sheep (v. 2); in other words, there are farmers and semi-nomads representing two different styles of life the Israelites were wont to see in Palestine. There developed also urban life (v. 17), and there appeared too men who tend cattle and live in tents (v. 20), play musical instruments (v. 21) and forge utensils of bronze and iron (v. 22).

In Gen. 4 the section dealing specifically with culture comprises vv. 17–22, and when these verses are taken together with v. 1, we get a catalogue of seven patriarchs, namely, Adam (v. 1), Cain, Enoch (v. 17), Irad, Mehujael, Methushael and Lamech (v. 18)³³. And cultural advance is evinced by the three occupations of Lamech's sons (vv. 19–22). The present catalogue of seven great men of the distant past is derived from the Sumero–Accadian tradition regarding the seven *apkallu* or sages who flourished before the flood, a tradition that must be discussed briefly, particularly since readers in India may not be quite familiar with it.

The designation *apkallu*³⁴ is a Sumerian loanword in vogue among the Accadians, which literally means “wise man, sage”. Sumero–Accadian lexical texts attest the correspondence NUN. ME or NUN. GAL (= AB. GAL) *apkallu*; this word is masculine in gender (the feminine form being *apkallatu*) and

33. Incidentally the name Lamech occurs in the cuneiform texts from Mari; the forms attested being *Lamkium* and *Lamki-Mari*, which may also be written *Lamgium* and *Lamgi-Mari* (for references to sources, cf. Luke, *op. cit.*, p. 177, n. 13).

34. On this term, cf. von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* I (Wiesbaden, 1965) p. 58; discussions in E. Reimer, “The Etiological Myth of the ‘Seven Sages’”, *Orientalia* NS 30 (1961) pp. 1–11. We also wish to point out that the word occurs too in Old South Arabian, Nabataen and Palmyrian, with the meanings “priest, priestly clan”; references in M. Höffner, *Die Religionen Altsyriens, Altarabiens und der Mandäer* (Die Religionen der Menschheit Bd. 10/2, Stuttgart, 1970) pp. 350, 372.

occurs at times as the epithet of such gods as Enki (Accadian Ea), Marduk, Nabu and others; compare the following words from the Code of Hammurabi: "Ea, the great prince... NUN. ME (= *apkal*) *ì-ìí*, knowing everything that has a name..." (rev. XXVI: 101); from the Gilgamesh epic we may cite the following statement: *at-ta* NUN. ME (*apkal*) DINGIR. MES. (*ilāni*), "You are the *apkallu* among the gods" (XI: 178). In these texts the expression *apkal ilī* (*ilāni*) is a superlative which means "wisest of (among) the gods". A mythical sage of whom the title *apkallu* is predicated is Adapa, the hero of a celebrated story³⁵, and finally it is the designation par excellence of the seven sages of the prediluvian age who taught men the arts and crafts of civilization.³⁶

The Babylonian priest Berossus who flourished around 340-275 B. C. and composed in Greek a work on Babylonian history, recounts how a sage, half fish and half man, named Oannes swam up from the Persian Gulf and instructed mankind

35. This story narrates how the god Ea once created a being with human features and the wisdom of the gods, and named him Adapa; now there is a syllabary (still unpublished) which attests the equation *a-da-ap* = man (*ANET*, p. 101, note), and it is tempting to find here a reference to Adam, the first man who was endowed with extraordinary wisdom. The myth recounts how the sage Adapa was, through stealth, prevented from partaking of the food of immortality (for the text of the story, cf. *ANET*, pp. 101-3).

36. According to the Gilgamesh Epic (I: i: 17-19) the seven sages were responsible for the building of the city of Uruk:

"Go up and walk on the walls of Uruk,
Inspect the base terrace, examine the brickwork:
Is not its brickwork of burnt brick?
Did not the Seven (Sages) lay its foundations?"

A doublet of this passages occurs too in col. XI: 304-5 (cf. *ANET*, pp. 73 b., 97a). Speiser (*ibid.*, p. 73 b, n. 7) points out that it was these seven wise men who brought civilization to the seven cities of the early times.

in arts and crafts.³⁷ Cuneiform sources confirm the literary tradition preserved by Berossus, and a text unearthed by German archaeologists from Uruk³⁸ does in fact give a list of seven sages, the first of whom bears the name U-an. This can very well be the hypocoristic form of U-an-Adapa, but be that as it may, there is no doubt that the person in question in the Uruk document is none other than Berossus' Oannes. One of the seven sages of the new text is Nungalpiriggar who is an expert in music, a detail that sheds a flood of light upon Gen. 4:21.

Another detail to be noted about the text under consideration is its structure, which shows some affinity with certain king lists from Assyria that mention, along with the rulers, the *ummānu* (i. e., chief secretaries, chancellors, chamberlains, or viziers) they had appointed.³⁹ The nature of the procedure in question here will be clear from a couple of lines cited at random from an Assyrian king list: "Sennacherib, king of Assyria; Nabuaplaiddin (his) vizier... Sennacherib king of Assyria and Babylon; Belupahhir (and) Kalbu his viziers."⁴⁰

37. On Berossus and his work, cf. P. Schnabel, *Berossos und die babylonisch-hellenistische Literatur* (Leipzig, 1923, repr., 1968).

38. That is, biblical Erech (Gen. 10:10); 'the Arabs call the place Warka, and Accadian sources attest the forms Arku and Urku. The document has been published by J. J. A. van Dijk, "Die Tontafeln aus dem rēs-Heiligtum," *UVB* 18 (1962) pp. 43-61. The siglum *UVB* means Uruk, Vorläufige Berichte (= Vorläufige Berichte über die vom Deutschen archäologischen Institut und der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft aus Mitteln der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft unternommenen Ausgrabungen in Uruk-Warka. 18. vorläufiger Bericht, Winter 1959/60. Abhandlungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 7, 1962).

39. For the sense of the term *ummānu*, cf. n. 49 below. The relevant documents were published by O. Schroeder, *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur erschienen Inhalts* (Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 35, Leipzig, 1920). The texts that are of interest here are designated as KAV 182 and KAV 216 (where KAV is the abbreviation of the title of the book here cited).

40. *ANET*, p. 273 b.

The king lists' add comments, and in this it continues a very old literary tradition very well attested by the so-called Sumerian King List.⁴¹ What follows is a passage cited at random from this document to illustrate the point, a passage that has also bearing upon our understanding of Enoch's assumption (Gen. 4: 24): "Etana, SIPA LU AN. SE BA. E₁₁. DE, a shepherd who to heaven ascended" (col. II: 15). What is of moment for us is the fact that Gen. 4: 17-22 with its comments upon some of the heroes of antiquity continues earlier literary usages, and the seven patriarchs mentioned by the Yahwist are, in conclusion, the harbingers of culture to mankind.

Lamech, the seventh patriarch, had three sons, bearing the names Jabal, Jubal and Tubal, names which go back to the root *wabālu* and its derivative *tabālu*,⁴² "to bear, carry," in the physical or moral sense. When used with reference to cult, the verbs will mean "to bring offerings to the deity" (cf. Hos. 10:6. 12:2. Is. 18:7); the nuance "to carry in procession, to lead in procession," is also possible, so that we may even consider the names as hypocoristic forms with the divine name omitted.⁴³

Since Proto-Semitic *wabālu*⁴⁴ will give rise, in Hebrew, to *yābal*, it follows that the name Jabal (in Hebrew *Yābāl*) is but a variant of the Hebrew base. The person called by this name is the ancestor of those who possess cattle and dwell in

41. Edition of the text with elaborate introduction, etc., by T. Jacobsen, *The Sumerian King List* (The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago Assyriological Studies No. 11, 4th impr., Chicago, 1973).

42. Accadian attests in the case of some biliteral weak verbs of the type *bil*, *lid*, etc. - verbs which have been, through Systemzwang or force of system, made trilateral -, secondary formations with *t* as the first radical; compare *wasābu* : *tasābu*, "to sit." We also wish to recall here that cuneiform sources refer to the land of Tabal, but now it is difficult to say whether this name has anything to do with the hero in Gen. 4.

43. Thus E. Testa, *Genesi* (La Sacra Bibbia, Turin, 1968) p. 344.

44. The form given in the text is the third person singular perfect of the simple stem (*wabālu* being the infinitive).

tents (v. 20),⁴⁵ and interestingly enough, the so-called Khorsabad king list speaks of the first seventeen kings as "dwelling in tents."⁴⁶ Jabal's brother bore the name Jubal, which is actually a passive form of the Hebrew base just mentioned and he was the ancestor of those who handle⁴⁷ the zither and the flute (v. 21).⁴⁸

As for the third name Tubal-Cain (In Hebrew *Tūbal-Qayin*), it is a compound which literally means "Tubal-Smith," or "Tubal the Smith"; the first element is a derivative of *tabālu* mentioned above, and the second, the word in Arabic denoting the worker in metals, and it might very well be employed here as rendering of the Accadian technical term *mār ummāni*, "expert

45. In the Hebrew original there is only a single verbal form, *yōsēb* (active participle of *yāsab*, "to dwell, abide"), governing both "tents" and "cattle." E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (The Anchor Bible, New York, 1964) p. 34 (cf. too p. 35) brings out the genius of the Hebrew text in his rendering "those who keep tents and cattle."

46. English translation in *ANETSup.*, pp. 564-66. We add here the relevant passage: "Tudiya, Adamu, Yangi, Kitlamu, Harharu, Mandaru... Total: 17 kings living in tents" (p. 564b). Discussions in Gelb, "Two Assyrian Kinglists," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 13 (1954) pp. 209-30. F. R. Kraus, *Könige, die in Zelten wohnten* (Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks, Deel 28/2, Amsterdam, 1965). W. Röllig, "Zur Typologie und Entstehung der babylonischen und assyrischen Königslisten," *Lisān mithurti. Festschrift W. von Soden* (Alter Orient und Altes Testament 1, Neukirchen, 1969) pp. 265-77.

47. The biblical writer uses the active participle *tōpeš*, from the base *tāpaš*, "to lay hold of, seize, handle" (sword, bow, etc.)

48. The Hebrew words are *kinnôr* and *ʿûgāb*; the first word, occurring 41 times in the OT (13 times in the Psalter) and corresponding to Sanskrit *kinnara*-, is discussed in Luke, *Israel before Yahweh*, p. 245, n. 8. The second term, which occurs but once in the Psalter (Ps. 150: 4; cf. too Job 21: 12. 30: 31), denotes in all likelihood the long flute.

worker, craftsman", etc.⁴⁹ It is difficult to say how far the figure of Tubal-Cain has been influenced by Ugaritic mythology which speaks of Kothar-wa-Khasis the metallurgist of the world of the gods who is quite intelligent and is even credited with having been the inventor of iron.⁵⁰ Now Tubal-Cain is the ancestor of all who forge instruments of bronze and iron (v. 22).⁵¹

Gen. 4: 17-22 is, then, the Yahwist's account of man's gradual ascent on the ladder of progress, but what does he mean by including this section in the span of time between man's expulsion from paradise and the great flood? A widely held view is that the J writer who looks askance at material progress, represents it as taking place among the descendants of Cain the sinner, and in confirmation of this understanding of Gen. 4: 17-22 it is also pointed out that Lamech the seventh patriarch was himself a most cruel man (Gen. 4: 23f.),⁵² but such an exegesis is not at all justified. Equally unjustified is the contention that the present account of the evolution of culture is the Hebrew variant of the myth of Prometheus who stole fire from heaven and gave it to man, thus enabling him to commence his upward rise, for in the biblical account there is no trace at all of man's stealing some secret or other that is God's most cherished and exclusive property.

For a full grasp of the inner significance of Gen. 4: 17-22, we have to view it against the background of the Yahwist's overall conception of God's will vis-à-vis man. According to Gen. 2: 15 Yahweh took the man he had formed from the ground and put him in the garden of Eden so that he might till

49. The meaning of the expression is clear, for example, from Gilgamesh XI: 85, where Utnapishtim the Babylonian Noah says: "I caused... DUMU.MES (*mārī*) *um-ma-a-ni* (= the craftsmen) to go (into the ship)." Be it noted that DUMU.MES is the Sumerogram corresponding to Accadian *mārī*, both meaning "sons, children," and the "sons" of *ummāni* are naturally expert craftsmen (cf. too the Code of Hammurabi §§ 182, 274).

50. Details in Gese, *Die Religionen Altsyriens, Altarabiens und der Mandäer* (n. 34) pp. 147f. The second element in the god's name comes from a root which means "to be wise, clever, expert."

51. Strictly speaking the reference to iron in biblical prehistory is an anachronism, for the iron age commenced only around 1200 B. C.

52. On the song of Lamech, cf. Luke, *Studies* (n. 31) pp. 1-13.

and keep it; man's activity in the garden calls for some comments. To "till and keep" correspond in the original *l^e 'obdāh wāl^e somrāh*, infinitives construct⁵³ of the verbs *'ābad* and *sāmar*, with the suffix of the third person feminine singular referring to "garden," and preceded by the preposition *l^e* which indicates the dative case. The infinitive construct of the first verb with the present preposition has been used in Gen. 2: 5 with reference to the ground, to indicate the negative fact that there was nobody to till the earth, and the occurrence of the same form with an additional element cannot but be intentional: the situation mentioned previously has been remedied. We wish to recall here that in Hebrew *'ābad* signifies manual labour. The second infinitive construct conveys the idea of man's having charge of the garden, for the verb *sāmar* is used with reference to property held in trust (Ex. 22: 6. 9). The garden naturally belongs to Yahweh, who has, however, put the man he had formed from the ground in charge of it. The first man's keeping the garden and making it yield fruit by his personal labour will evidently mean his active and effective exercise of dominion over the whole of material creation; the Yahwist therefore affirms in his own way a truth that the P writer has stated in explicit terms.

Even after man fell into sin and was subjected to punishment, the divine will in his regard did not change: he was expelled from the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken (Gen. 3: 23); here too the Yahwist uses the infinitive construct of the verb *'ābad* mentioned above. And the material progress man has achieved ever after his sin in paradise is, then, quite in keeping with God's holy will in his regard.

.....

Man, the concrete and dynamic image of God here on earth, has to exercise dominion over the whole of material creation, so that every man may be able to sit under his vine and under his fig tree, partaking merrily of their produce (1 Kg. 5: 5). When the OT speaks of the life of enjoyment and pleasure here below, it is thinking invariably of the life of fellowship with God, yes, life of communion with the God of revelation who has ever been active and operative in the history of salvation. And towards the realization of this goal terrestrial realities have their own contribution to make; the good things of this life have, therefore,

53. Infinitives being verbal nouns, they can be put in genitival relation with nouns and suffixes (cf. n. 14 above).

something to contribute to man's life fellowship with his lord and saviour.

The following prayer composed by an anonymous sage of ancient Israel admirably sums up biblical man's attitude towards terrestrial realities:

"Two things I ask of thee;
deny them not to me before I die:
Remove far from me falsehood and lying;
give me neither poverty nor riches;
feed me with the food that is needful for me,
lest I be full and deny thee,
and say, 'Who is the Lord?'
or lest I be poor, and steal,
and profane the name of my God" (Prv. 30: 7-9).

Needless to say, the author neither condemns or deifies the good things of this life, but sees in them a positive value inasmuch as they are a means for him to live fully the life of fellowship with God.

The tradition of the Bible outlined above has had its impact on the countries of the West that had adopted the Judaeo-Christian faith, and that is why they have almost exclusively been responsible for the progress of science, while the contributions of non-Christian countries has, until recently, been virtually nil. All the nations of Africa and Asia are following suit, and most educated Africans and Asians are struggling to get to the West, there to enjoy the fruits of Western technology. It is not to be denied that technological progress has its drawbacks, and that the industrialized countries have been guilty of flagrant injustice; this should remind us, on the one hand, of the fact that nothing here on earth is perfect, and, on the other, of the need to fight and eliminate sins of injustice, for man's exploitation of his neighbour - man's use of neighbour as a tool to pamper his selfishness - is a grievous sin, in condemning which the Scriptures are most evocal. In conclusion, man, as he waits for the establishment of God's rule here on earth, has to be engaged in the work of subduing material creation, so as to make here below more pleasant, and as he carries out the creator's will in his regard he must be on his guard against becoming a slave of the pseudo-god called Mammon, and also against exploiting his neighbour: such is the integral teaching of the Scriptures regarding terrestrial realities.

Terrestrial Realities in Qoheleth's Teaching

The book of Qoheleth¹ is most explicit on the question of the attitude the pious man has to adopt towards terrestrial realities: "There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and provide himself with good things by his labours. Even this, I realized, is from the hand of God. For who can eat or drink apart from him" (2:24f.)² Most readers of the Bible will be shocked as they happen to hear the words here cited, and naturally will also ask whether a Christian can ever accept as norm of life the statement that there is nothing better on the face of this earth than to enjoy life. A survey of Qoheleth's teaching is most imperative, for the Christian believer will have some time or other to face the questions he has raised and give them an answer which must naturally be inspired by the revelation of God in Christ. Let us first of all try to get acquainted with the person of the Preacher and his ways of thinking.

I. Qoheleth the Man

Qoheleth has been called a pessimist, a sceptic, a cynic, an Epicurean and so on; he has been regarded as a man given to prolonged introspection, a man with a morose and melancholic character, who could see only the sombre and unpleasant side of life, and used to react wholly negatively to it. Since negative sentiments loom large over the Preacher's horizon, exegeses, whose approach has been guided and governed by psychology, detected in the author pessimism, cynicism, etc. Now that we know that the "I" in a work of literature is not autobiographical (psychological), the endeavour to produce a character sketch of the biblical writer becomes absurd. All that we

1. Or, the book of Ecclesiastes; the Hebrew term Qoheleth is generally rendered Preacher.

2. Compare too 3:12f., 5:17-19, 7:14, 8:15, 9:7-10 and 11:9f., where again the same thought occurs; these passages are cited in the second part of our study.

know for certain is that the Preacher was a Jewish sage, and in any pronouncement we dare to make about him, this basic fact must be taken into account.

The sages of the Orient belonged to the upper strata of society, for only the well-to-do had the time and means to acquire what we might, borrowing a modern jargon, call "higher education." Their social status enabled them to undertake journeys in quest of wisdom and learning, to move in respectable and aristocratic circles, and to come into contact with foreigners. As for our writer, he lived in Jerusalem (1:12. 2:9), used to frequent the temple and take part in the cult there (4:17f.), and was acquainted with the corruption in the high places (5:7). He was interested in literary activity and was concerned not only with "words of truth" but also with "pleasing words" (12:9f.): such, at least was the opinion of his disciples who knew him very well.³ He was therefore a man of refined tastes, which also means that he was not a peasant, a man from the country side who was at home with agricultural pursuits (5:9).

The sages of antiquity were invariably men advanced in age, so that it is lawful for us to surmise that Qoheleth wrote his book in the evening of life. His graphic account of the coming of old age (12:1-7), though by no means an autobiographical narrative, is most appropriate in the mouth of a man who has passed through many summers and winters. The admonition to rejoice when one is young (11:9) is understandable only in the mouth of an elderly person (compare too 11:8); the advice to do whatever one can when one is young and the statement that man is on his way to Sheol the nether world where he cannot do anything (9:10) are quite congruent in an old man's talk. The exhortation to remember the grave⁴ in one's youth, before the dawn of evil days, namely, old age with all its sufferings (12:1), is what we normally expect to hear from those who are no more young.

3. Qoh. 12:9-14 forms the epilogue which is a later addition.

4. The word in the Hebrew original can also be rendered creator, but the context is in favour of the translation grave: when one is young he has to think about his death, so that before it befalls him he can enjoy life.

A modern commentator⁵ has expressed the view that Qoheleth was a bachelor, which is certainly unlikely since marriage was regarded as a sacred duty by the people of Israel; nay more, the author's harping on the need to enjoy life with one's wife (9:9) would be something most unusual in the case of a man who has deliberately abstained from marriage. It is also not legitimate to affirm that he had no children, and even when he feels worried at the thought that a person's wealth will have to be given over to strangers (6:2; cf. 2:18-21, 4:8, 5:10), he need not be speaking in an autobiographical strain. Finally there is no reason to think that the Preacher had no regard for his kith and kin (4:8-12, 5:13): such an attitude, though common in the sophisticated society of the West, would be something unheard of in the ancient Orient.

A close reading of the book of Qoheleth shows that the writer was quite jovial, though without being a jolly sort of fellow. For him simply to be was a source of immense joy (9:4); he enjoyed not only the pleasures of sex (9:9) and eating and drinking but also the wonders of nature such as the gentle and pleasant light of the sun (11:7). That he had an exquisite sense of beauty is amply vouched for by the glowing description he gives of gardens and parks with all kinds of fruit trees and pools (2:4-8). He had a highly sensitive nature, and that is why he was shocked at the prevalence of corruption and injustice here on earth (4:1f. 5:7. 7:15. 10:6f.). He was in the habit of observing whatever was transpiring in the milieu in which he lived, and that is what enabled him to make pertinent and penetrating observations about man's envy of his neighbour and its consequences (4:4), about the love of money which can never be satisfied (5:10), about the anxieties the increase of wealth brings in its train (5:11), about the inability of the rich to enjoy sleep because of surfeitedness (5:12), etc.

Endowed as he was with a sharp critical sense, Qoheleth would be the last person to accept with blind faith the time-honoured teaching of the sages that wisdom would necessarily

5. R. Gordis, *Koheleth - the Man and His World* (Texts and Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America 19, New York, 1951) p. 78.

lead to happiness. As is to be expected of a man of his calibre, he questions everything in a quite critical manner, going at times to the extent of reducing to absurdity many a common persuasion. The starting point of his reflections is the traditionally accepted teaching of the sages just cited, but as he finds that this thesis is contradicted by facts of daily experience, he submits it to a scathing criticism, and at the end he is surprised to find that he has reached startling conclusions: wisdom is the source of suffering (1:18); the wise man is no better than the fool (2:15f.); man and beasts share the same fate (3:18-20). Inasmuch as he takes up and develops certain trends of thought to the exclusion of all the rest, he ends up by becoming quite radical, and he, to be sure, is thus guilty of onesidedness.

Qoheleth is a veritable demolisher of traditional structures, though at the same time he avows his inability to offer not only something better but also a simple ersatz to what he has so easily brushed away. Does this mean that he is an irreligious, thorough-going sceptic? By no means, for even when he questions everything he takes God and his sovereignty seriously, as the most unquestionable of all realities, and by accepting God as the beginning and end of everything, he shows himself to be a genuine Israelite. True, he never uses the divine name Yahweh, and nor does he ever refer to the history of salvation, but in all this he is simply following traditional patterns of thought: the sages of Israel never dwell upon the history of salvation, and the writers of wisdom books in the ancient Orient invariably employ the generic term God instead of any specific proper name;⁶ we shall clarify this point with the help of examples.

The celestial world of the non-Israelite peoples of antiquity pullulated with gods and goddesses, the more important ones among them having names and specific functions, but the authors of wisdom compositions generally avoid mentioning these names; compare the opening lines of the Sumerian poem "Man and his God:"⁷

"Let a man utter constantly the exaltedness of his god,
Let the young man praise artlessly the words of his god."⁷

6. Cf. W. Zimmerli, *Prediger* (Das Alte Testament Deutsch 16/1, Göttingen, 1962) pp. 137f.

7. *ANETSup.*, p. 589.

Compare too the following Sumerian proverbs:⁸ "The destruction comes from his god; he knows no saviour"; "Act promptly and make your god happy." In these texts the writers are thinking of the personal gods of the pious man, who generally were minor deities chosen as patrons, but the sages do not feel the need to mention their names. The Accadian or Assyro-Babylonian tradition can be seen in the well-known poem "I will praise the Lord of wisdom."⁹ The following passages from the work known as "Instruction for King Merikare" illustrate the Egyptian usage: "... God will be praised as your reward;"¹⁰ "Act for God... The god is aware of him who acts for him."¹¹ Qoheleth is, in short, following a well established canon of ancient wisdom literature when he uses only the generic term God.

The Preacher's undeniable originality as an investigator is best seen in the way in which he develops his thoughts and insights and then draws startling conclusions. There is first the description of a fact of experience, an observation on some fact or other of life., which is followed by an inference or practical conclusion that often happens to be quite shocking, inasmuch as it goes counter to all the traditional values. To take a concrete example, accepting in all seriousness the sages' advice to seek after wisdom, Qoheleth "stored up wisdom" beyond all who were before him in Jerusalem, but at the end he was startled to find that "in much wisdom there is much sorrow" (1:18)! Formulated somewhat differently, the author's saying is a frank avowal of the principle that idiots are happier than the intelligent! To be sure, he was himself surprised beyond measure at the conclusion he had been forced to draw from his disquisitions.

Qoheleth's utterances are generally dialectic in nature: they are statements which raise an objection, of course, to the commonly accepted teachings of the wise men, and they are therefore indicative of a shaking of foundations, of the author's own loss of faith in what he has taught. And herein lies the

8. E. I. Gordon, *Sumerian Proverbs* (repr., New York, 1968).

9. *ANETSup.*, p. 597.

10. *ANET*, p. 415.

11. *ANET*, p. 417.

crisis of wisdom in Qoheleth.¹² The method of approach adopted by our author is rightly called dialectic, inasmuch as every thesis is invariably followed by an antithesis, but after all the digressions a synthesis is never in sight, and Qoheleth avows his inability to construct something that will replace what he has so easily demolished by his shrewd reasoning.

A few words must be said about the Preachers's assuming the mask of Solomon and making use of the first person singular in the course of his discussions;¹³ compare, for example, the following: "I also had growing herds of cattle . . . more than all men who have been before me in Jerusalem . . . I became great, and I stored up more than all others before me in Jerusalem" (2 : 7-9). Qoheleth is stating without any qualms of conscience that he surpassed all his predecessors in every respect: this, from our point of view, is an inflated, nay over-inflated claim, an instance of shameless boasting, but in antiquity this sort of talk was an integral part of the court language, for monarchs were in the habit of recording in their inscriptions how they, through their spectacular achievements, succeeded in outshining their predecessors.

The first thing that strikes us as we start reading the royal inscriptions of the ancient Semitic world is the copious use of the first person singular: on the orders of his god the king performs unparalleled, unheard of feats of valour. Occasionally, however, the king may use the third person singular, a procedure very well illustrated by the inscription of Yahdun-Lim of the kingdom of Mari on the Upper Euphrates (18th cent. B. C.): "... while no other king residing in Mari had ever . . . reached the (Mediterranean) Sea . . . , he Yahdun-Lim . . . did march to the shore of the sea, an unrivalled feat."¹⁴ The use of the first person singular may be seen in the two following texts. Nebucha-

12. On this, cf. H. Gese, "Die Krisis der Weisheit bei Koheleth," *Les sagesses du Proche-Orient ancien* (colloque de Strasbourg 17-19 mai 1962, Paris, 1963) pp. 139-51,

13. Details in O. Loretz, "Zur Darbietungsform der 'Ich-Erzählung' im Buche Qoheleth," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 25 (1963) pp. 46-59.

14. *ANETSup.*, p. 556.

dnezzar, the celebrated ruler responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem, says in an inscription: "What no former king had done (I achieved): I cut through steep mountains . . . , opened passages."¹⁵ In the second passage the speaker is a petty ruler in north-west Syria (second half of the ninth cent. B. C.): "I am Kilamuwa . . . Gabbar became king . . . but he was ineffective . . . There was my father Hayyah but he was ineffective. There was my brother Shail but he was ineffective. But . . . what I achieved, the former (kings) did not achieve."¹⁶ Qoheleth, we say, follows this tradition when he employs the first person singular.

If it is asked what exactly has been the purpose of the authors of the texts here cited when they resorted to the technique of stylistic "I", the answer is that they wanted to render their writings all the more appealing and attractive: a thing a man recounts personally is much more impressive than an account of something experienced by somebody somewhere on the face of this earth! The use of the first person is therefore a deliberate stylistic device which is able to produce some sort of dramatic effect on the hearer (reader).

What is the position of Qoheleth's critical enquiries within the framework of Old Testament theology?¹⁷ The answer to this question is furnished by Gen. 1:26-28 which describes how man has been created in God's own image. The image of God in man is something concrete, in the sense that the human person as he exists on the level of experience is the very image of God; it is also dynamic inasmuch as it involves his endeavour to subdue the universe and affirm in this way his privileged status in the world of creation. For the sages in Israel the endeavour to fathom the depths of visible creation was an act of obedience on man's part to God's will in his regard, and wisdom therefore belongs to the sphere of creation theology. Specialists have pointed out that Qoheleth closely follows the creation

15. ANET, p. 307.

16. ANETSup., p. 654.

17. Zimmerli, *op. cit.*, pp. 140f.; cf. too the same scholar's study, "Ort und Grenze der Weisheit im Rahmen der alttestamentlichen Theologie," *Les sagesses*, pp. 121-36.

accounts in Gen. 1-2;¹⁸ therefore he, even when subjecting each and every time-honoured tenet of his religion to drastic criticism, moves within the framework of a specific [theology].

In his contemplation of the created world and of all that transpires in it, Qoheleth, much in the same way as the author of the book of Job, shows how everything is guided and governed not by the principle of retribution so loudly proclaimed by the defendants of traditional wisdom as by pure chance, by some kind of caprice and arbitrariness which remains inexplicable and inscrutable. This terrible experience does not, however, make him burst forth into long complaints or bitter laments; on the contrary he honestly accepts the inevitable, knowing fully well that everything comes from God, and keeps on insisting on the need to make the best use of the given situation. The most paradoxical thing about the Preacher is that every detour of his from traditional teaching turns out at the end to be a return to God; even though every step he takes seeks to make him wander away from God, at the end he finds himself in God's august presence, a point that will become clear in the second part of our study.

The book of Qoheleth is unique in every respect; an attempt has, therefore, been made in this section to introduce the author to the reader, for only in this way will the latter be able to evaluate him rightly.

II

Qoh. 1:1 is the superscription, added to the book by the redactor, who has also intended it to serve as the work's title, and the ensuing verse enunciates the theme developed in the book: "Vanity of vanities," says Qoheleth, "vanity of vanities! All things are vanity" (v. 2)! "Vanity," occurring five times in the verse here cited, and thirty-one times in the body of the book, is one of the key concepts of the Preacher's discourses, and the Hebrew word he uses literally means "vapour, breath," and hence also the rendering "A vapour of vapours! Thinnest of vapours! All

18. C. C. Forman, "Koheleth's Use of Genesis," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 5 (1960) pp. 256-63.

is vapour!"¹⁹ The sense is figurative: what is evanescent, devoid of content, worthless. In "vanity of vanities" we have a superlative, comparable to "songs of song" (Song 1:1), "holy of holies" (Ex. 26:33 f.), etc. Let us now see how Qoheleth develops the theme announced in 1:2 and gives his evaluation of terrestrial realities.

The thesis that has just been enunciated is proved with an appeal to experience: generations pass in quick succession, and nature is itself in uninterrupted motion, but nothing new results (1:3-11). All human effort is fruitless: man is not going to change the world (1:12-15), gain understanding (1:16-18), and enjoy happiness (2:1-11); finally there is the fact of death which robs man of everything that he has acquired (2:12-23). What should one do in this predicament? Qoheleth's answer is clear-cut: "There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and provide himself with good things by his labours. Even this, I realized, is from the hand of God. For who can eat or drink apart from him" (2:24 f.)?

There is the mystery of time (3:1-15): everything happens in a way that has long since been predetermined, and man can neither understand nor change this pattern. True, God has made everything beautiful in its time, but he has also put into man's heart ignorance²⁰ regarding the appropriate moment, with the result that God's work remains beyond his comprehension (vv. 11f.). In this tragic plight "there is nothing better than to be glad and to do well during life. For every man, moreover, to eat and drink and enjoy the fruit of all his labour is a gift of God" (vv. 12f.).

Prevalence of evil on this earth is a problem that disturbs the believer in God (3:16-4:3). By permitting wickedness God

19. Thus R. B. Y. Scott, *Proverbs Ecclesiastes* (Anchor Bible, New York, 1965) p. 208.

20. In the Hebrew original there is the word 'olam which means not only "eternity" but also "ignorance;" many scholars accept the rendering "eternity," but it is difficult to see how it suits the context which deals with the problem of man's inability to know the right time.

is testing man, to make him aware that he is only a beast! Nay more, in the matter of death man and beast are alike: both die, and nobody knows what happens to them. This reasoning must not scandalize us: the Preacher was not at all aware of the life of bliss after death, and like the sages of Israel who preceded him or who were his contemporaries, he visualized the present life as man's *summum bonum*, while the state of existence of those in Sheol remained a thing that was most terror-inspiring. The fact of inevitable death prompts the Preacher to draw his usual conclusion: "And I saw that there is nothing better for a man than to rejoice in his work; for this is his lot. Who will let him see what is to come after him" (v. 22)? The fact of certain death makes enjoyment most imperative.

Men are consumed by envy and greed (4:4-12); there is no doubt the fool who remains idle and thus ruins himself (v. 5), but generally people are jealous of each other and avaricious. The greedy man may be quite rich, but his wealth can be no substitute for fellowship with other men (vv. 7-12). Fame too will not last, as is borne out by the fact that a king who rose from obscurity to fame is supplanted by another like himself; this latter naturally will have to yield place to another (4:13-16). By using many words and making inconsiderate promises to God, one is not to gain anything (4:17-5:6), though one has always to fear God (5:6). Oppression of the poor, covetousness and loss of riches are facts of daily experience (5:7-19), and in the face of all these negative factors in life, the best thing for a man is "to eat and drink and enjoy all the fruits of his labour under the sun during the limited days of his life which God gives him; for this is his lot. Any man to whom God gives riches and property, and grants power to partake of them, so that he receives his lot and finds joy in the fruits of his toil, has a gift from God" (5:17f.). Unfortunately, however, man never bothers to dwell upon the shortness of his life, but instead he occupies himself with fleeting joys, and this too is part of the vanity of life (5:19). As for enjoyment itself, it has only a limited value (6:1-12).

Qoheleth recommends reflection and self-control, and to drive home his point he cites a series of seven proverbs (7:1-14),

but at the end he reverts to the conclusion he has long since formulated: "On a good day enjoy good things, and on an evil day consider: both the one and the other God has made, so that man cannot find fault with him in anything" (v. 14). Though the sages teach that the just will flourish and the wicked, on the contrary, will perish, Qoheleth has seen the good man perishing in his righteousness and the impious man surviving in his impiety, but in spite of this traumatic experience the Preacher concedes that wisdom is superior to folly (7: 15-25). Woman can be dangerous (7: 26-29), and one has to be on one's guard while speaking about the ruler (8: 1-9), even when he happens to be a tyrant (v. 9). The problem of retribution comes up again: contrary to what the sages teach, the sinner does evil a hundred times and survives (8: 10-17). At the end one has to confess that God's work cannot be found out, and Qoheleth on his part recommends "mirth, because there is nothing better for man under the sun than eating and drinking and mirth: for this is the accompaniment of his toil during the limited days of the life which God gives him under the sun" (v. 15).

There is the terrible uncertainty regarding the future (9:1-11: 6), which should not, however, hinder a man from labouring and taking risks; he has also to enjoy life: "Go eat your bread with joy and drink your wine with a merry heart, because it is now that God favours your works. At all times let your garments be white, and spare not the perfume for your head. Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of the fleeting life that is granted you under the sun. Anything that you can turn your hand to, do with what power you have; for there will be no work, no reason, no knowledge, nor wisdom in the nether world where you are going" (9: 7-10).

Lastly there is old age and death (11:7-12:8), the description of which has been judged by literary men as the most beautiful passage in the entire Bible. Once when a number of distinguished English writers were asked to say what they thought of as the most beautiful passage in the Bible, Qoh. 12 appeared more often in their selections than any other text.²¹ The great

21. As reported by D. Southard, "Ecclesiastes," *The Teachers' Commentary* 7th ed., London, 1955) p. 261.

English writer Alfred Noyes has the following remark to make: "On what may be called the purely literary side I have always thought that the most beautiful passage in the O. T. is the great chapter of Ecclesiastes which begins: 'Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth'...."²² We shall briefly consider the poem on old age since it treats of something which, if we are going to have a long life, we cannot escape: old itself is a terrestrial reality! The poem is preceded by a short introduction in prose (11: 7f.) and a poetical exhortation to those who are young to enjoy life (11: 9f.); this piece will appear in all its beauty when we read it after analysing the grandiose account in 12: 1-7.

12: 1-7 has three distinct parts, the first of which (v. 1) describes old age as the most unwholesome stage in man's life:

"Remember your grave²³ in the days of your youth,
before the evil days come
And the years approach of which you will say,
I have no pleasure in them."

The second part (vv. 2-5) describes old age with the help of a variety of images whose meaning is not always clear.

"Before the sun is darkened,
and the light, and the moon, and the stars,
while the clouds return after the rain;
When the guardians of the house tremble,
and the strong men are bent,
And the grinders are idle because they are few,
and they who look through the windows are blind;
When the doors to the street are shut,
and the sound of the mill is low;
When one waits for the chirp of a bird,
but all the daughters of song are suppressed;
And one fears heights,
and perils in the street;
When the almond tree blooms,
and the locust grows sluggish
and the caper berry is without effect,
Because man goes to his lasting home,
and mourners go about the streets."

22. Southard, *ibid.*

23. Cf. n. 4 above.

It must be noted that some of the lines of the second part can also be translated in other ways, and what is given here is only one possible rendering. The darkening of the sun, and the return of the clouds after the rains when it should normally be clear, are both symbols of the sombre side of old age. The guardians are the arms, the strong men the legs, the grinders the teeth, and those who look through the window the eyes; in old age all these organs become enfeebled. When a house is in ruins or has been abandoned, the front door will not be opened, and even if there is somebody or other in the house, there will not be any movement or activity. Some interpreters understand the shut doors of the tightly compressed lips, the sound of the mill of mastication, and the daughters of song of the voice. The old are afraid to climb heights and are not confident enough to walk through the streets. The sluggish locust symbolizes the old man who cannot freely move about, and caper berry which was supposed to stimulate the sex appetite becomes ineffective in the case of the aged. The almond tree with its white blossoms points to the grey hair on the head of the aged, who finally will have to go their graves. And mourners, who generally are people hired for the purpose will perform the rite of lamentation, and with that everything will be over.

The third part (vv. 6f.) describes death with the help of four images and then goes on to add that dust returns to the earth and the breath to God.

“Before the silver cord is snapped,
and the golden bowl is broken,
And the pitcher is shattered at the spring,
and the broken pulley falls into the well,
And the dust returns to the earth as it once was,
and the life breath returns to God who gave it.”

The four images of death are the silver cord, the golden bowl, the pitcher and the pulley, all of them meant to be destroyed in some way or other. In the final verse Qoheleth shows himself dependent upon the creation account and the story of the fall in Gen. 2-3.

Before all this happens what should the young man do? Qoheleth's answer is quite in keeping with his overall outlook:

“Rejoice, O young man, while you are young,
 and let your heart be glad in the days of your youth.
 Follow the ways of your heart,
 the vision of your eyes;
 Yet understand that as regards all this
 God will bring you to judgment.
 Ward off grief from your heart
 and put away trouble from your presence,
 though the dawn of youth is fleeting.”

Rejoicing must be done “before the sun is darkened...” And the only thing the young man must bear in mind is the certainty of God’s judgment.

III

From our discussions so far it is clear that Qoheleth has something definite to say about terrestrial realities which will cause surprise to many a pious Christian reader of the Bible. His message simply is to enjoy the good things of this life as much as possible before death intervenes and puts an end to everything.²⁴ Life has its negative side, which lends lie to the

24. Similar thoughts occur too in the literature of ancient Egypt; compare the following extract taken from banquet songs: “None comes from thence (the nether world) that he may tell us how they fare, that he may tell us what they need, that he may set our heart at rest, until we also go to the place whither they are gone.

Be glad, that you may cause your heart to forget that men will (one day = at the time of funeral) beatify you, Follow your desire, so long as you live. Put myrrh on your head, clothe yourself in fine linen, and anoint yourself with the genuine marvels of the things of the god.

Increase yet more the delights that you have, and let not your heart grow faint. Follow your desire, and do good to yourself. Do what you require upon earth, and vex not your heart – until the day of lamentation comes. Yet He with the Quiet Heart (= the god of the dead, Osiris) hears not their lamentation, and cries deliver no man from the underworld” (A. Erman, *The Ancient Egyptians. A Sourcebook of their writings* [Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1966] p. 133).

teaching of the sages that wisdom and virtue lead to happiness. In the face of the miseries of life man has to make the best out of his life here on earth, which means that he must utilize terrestrial realities for his enjoyment.

Does the Preacher's insistence on the enjoyment of life mean that he is inculcating hedonism as the supreme norm of life here on earth? By no means. For him enjoyment is itself a gift of God: it is from the hand of God (2:24), who gives to whatever man he deems fit wisdom, knowledge and joy (2:26); even the enjoyment of the fruit of one's own labour is a gift from on high (3:13), and it is God who gives riches and property and also the power to enjoy them (5:19). Enjoyment is, then, finding joy in God's gifts, so that there is no question of any hedonism in Qoheleth. From the Christian point of view such an enjoyment will mean finding joy in the gift of salvation the Father in heaven graciously bestows upon his children.

While speaking of enjoyment, Qoheleth uses the technical term *heleq*, "portion"; we add here the different forms in Hebrew: *helqi*, "my portion" (2:10), *helqo*, "his portion" (2:21, 3:22, 5:17f., 9:9), and *helqeka*, "your portion" (9:9). As a technical term *heleq* in the Hebrew Bible denotes the particular unit of territory Yahweh has assigned to the individual tribes that form the community of Israel.²⁵ The portion of land each group in Israel received was a special gift of God, a gift that in the final analysis involves salvation in the most comprehensive sense of the term. While making use of a word that is so rich in theological nuances, the Preacher is telling his readers that the enjoyment of life he inculcates means their share in God's free gift of salvation. Terrestrial realities and the pleasure man derives from them are, therefore, part of the *bona salutis* God most generously bestows upon mankind.

What shall we say about the significance of Qoheleth's teaching for the Christian believer? How shall we translate it

25. F. Brown et alii, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (repr., Oxford, 1962) p. 324.

into the categories of God's revelation in the NT? The vanity of which the Preacher speaks is recognized by the NT, which on its part teaches too that it will be transcended (Rom. 8:19-22). Christ's work of redemption has saved the material world from the curse it has so far been labouring under (Gen. 3:17), and because of this the believer can rejoice. According to both Qoheleth and the NT, the man who shares in God's gift of salvation can rejoice; the Preacher's message can, therefore, be summarized thus: "Rejoice in the Lord! I say it again: rejoice" (Phil. 4:4)! Terrestrial realities in their own humble way contribute to this rejoicing of the believer.

Kattappana, Idikki

Jacob Matthew

Terrestrial Realities in the Preaching of Jesus

Introduction

God created man in His image, after His likeness, and said to him: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that move upon the earth" (Gen. 1: 28). Since then man has striven to enter into and unravel the mysteries of the universe, discover the marvels of nature and rise from his discoveries both to praise the Lord of creation and to make use of them for his own progress and development. He has thus taken God's command to heart in order to build and order the world in which he lives. Today the tools for the development of the world are the products of a highly advanced technological civilization. In God's plan the ordering, building and progress in the world is in reality a continuation of the divine work of creation. Its results we call 'culture' in the broad sense; it includes the whole order of community with all its institutions and contents.¹ Everything in the world² is God's gift to man in order that man, using it gratefully, may discover its hidden treasure and thus further God's glory here on earth.

1. cfr. Anton Boehm: "Serving the world," *Th. Dig.* 12 (1964) 56 "Das kulturelle Wirken, das Wirken auf der Erde also ist in der oder zusammen mit der Erschaffung des Menschen selbst begründet. Diese Kulturaufgabe ist vom Menschsein des Menschen nicht ablosbar. Jahwe schuf ein Geschöpf, das er anspricht, das ihm antwortet und ihm entspricht, ein Geschöpf, das zu seinem Gegenseiter da ist. "cfr. Klaus Gouders:" Gottes Schoepfung und der Auftrag des Menschen," *Bibel und Leben*, 14 (1973) 170.

2. 'World' here is here considered as a creation of God, an image of him, in that it has order, is a cosmos and not a chaos.

After man's fall, "cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field" (Gen. 3 : 17-18). From then on human history has become a process of emancipation and freedom from every kind of slavery, in which process man is still regarded as a creative subject shaping his own destiny and directing his society to the point where he will be liberated from the curses of the fall³.

In the course of Salvation History God chose Abraham from among the nations in order to reveal Himself and His redemptive plan for mankind. God promised Abraham, as sign and pledge of his election, a numerous progeny and a land flowing with milk and honey. "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing" (Gen. 12 : 1-2).⁴ God's promise was partially fulfilled by the possession of the land of Canaan by the descendants of the patriarchs, the Israelites. Centuries later, however, their prophets reminded them that God's blessings of good land and numerous progeny were to be only types and shadows of the true messianic blessings of the eschatological age.

The Messiah did appear in the world in the person of Jesus Christ and mediated the salvific goods to men of God's election. "Those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren. And those whom he predestined, he also called, and those whom he called he also justified and those whom he justified he also glorified" (Rom. 8 : 29-30).

Questions are now asked: What salvific goods did Jesus bring to men? What was the attitude of Jesus towards terrestrial realities? If terrestrial blessings are types and "shadows of the good things to come" (Heb. 10: 1), have they been superseded after Jesus' coming by other-wordly realities? What value did

3. cfr. G. Gutiérrez Mering "Notes for a Theology of Liberation," *Th. Dig.* 19 (1971) 142

4. cfr. also Gen. 12 : 7; 17 : 6-8 etc.

Jesus give them in his attitude and teaching? These are some of the questions we shall try to answer in this essay. We shall limit our study to the synoptic gospels.

The mission of Jesus

One can sum up the meaning of Jesus' mission and message in one phrase: *Kingdom of God*. All the New Testament writings speak about the establishment of God's Kingdom. According to the Synoptists the Kingdom of God forms the core of Jesus' Good News. Above all, the parables of Jesus dwell on the different phases of the Kingdom. They have a common theme which might be described in the words of C. H. Dodd as "the arrival of the Zero hour".⁵ "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel", (Mk. 1 : 15) is the very first proclamation of Jesus. In order therefore to understand the Gospel message of Jesus one must know what the Kingdom of God means.

Kingdom of God

The psalmist exclaims: "Yahweh reigns", and describes Yahweh's ascension on the throne.⁶ About half a millenium before fulness of time" (Ga. 4 : 4) the great exilic prophet, whom the exegetical world names 'Deutero-Isaiah, prophesied the return of the exiles from the Babylonian captivity and called it as the inauguration of the new kingdom of God. *Matkuth* in Hebrew, *Basileia* in Greek, does not mean kingdom in the sense of a territory to be governed or a particular region because "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein" (Ps. 24 : 1). It signifies rather 'sovereignty' or 'kingly rule'.⁷

The Israelites accepted from revelation that the reign of God is eternal and beyond time because God is now and always king. "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endures throughout all generations" (Ps. 145 : 13). God's reign,

5. cfr. C. H. Dodd: *The Founder of Christianity*, London, 1974, p. 66

6. cfr. Pss. 93 : 97; 49 etc.

7. cfr. J. L. McKenzie: *Dictionary of the Bible*, London, 1965, p. 480

however, is only partially realized through acceptance and acknowledgment of God by the people of Israel to whom He revealed Himself in a special manner. According to the rabbis, when a Jew daily recites the *shema* (Dt. 6 : 4), he is said to take upon himself the yoke of the divine sovereignty. In point of fact, both Jews and gentiles have failed to accept and acknowledge God's sovereignty. Therefore, amidst the evils and miseries of the present the pious Jew dreamed of and prayed for the future time when the living God would finally usher his rule and overthrow the powers of evil and show His grace and mercy to His faithful people. "May He establish his kingdom during your life and during your days and during the life of all the houses of Israel" was the oft-repeated prayer of the Jews. A. M. Hunter sums up the Old Testament concept of God's kingdom in these words: "The eternal sovereignty of God, now acknowledged in Israel, will one day be effectively manifested in the world".⁸

Now the centre of Jesus' message, the proclamation of the Kingdom of God, could readily be combined with the above-indicated Jewish hope. The New Testament writers make it clear that the long-awaited day has at long last arrived by the appearance of Jesus on the scene. Jesus himself was preceded and proclaimed by John the Baptizer.⁹ The prophecies of the Old Testament have begun to be fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus. "Go and tell John what you hear and see; the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the good news preached to them" (Mt. 11 : 5).

The Kingdom of God in Jesus' proclamation is eschatological in character. The parables of the kingdom, namely, the figure of the banquet, the harvest, the mustard seed, the leaven and others are constantly directed to the coming of God's perfect kingdom. The sayings which refer to entering the Kingdom, the beatitudes, the petition 'thy kingdom come' in the Lord's prayer, and above all the message that the kingdom of

8. H. M. Hunter: *The Word and Works of Jesus*, London, 1968, p. 70

9. cfr. Mk. 1 : 1-4, 14

God is approaching in Mk 1:15 can only be explained as the announcement of God's kingdom which is indeed close at hand but still in the future, however distant or near one may conceive it to be.¹⁰

Therefore God's Kingdom will see its completion at the end of the revelatory process when Christ shall have subjected himself to God (1 Cor. 15:28). However, we already stand in the kingdom of Christ. "He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13-14). When Jesus was asked regarding the time of the arrival of the kingdom, he answered in obscure phrase that it is "in your midst", *entos hymon* (Lk. 17:20 f). This phrase is best understood as signifying that the kingdom is present proleptically operative in the person of Jesus Himself, in so far as he, in his person as the bearer of the announcement of the dawning kingdom, and in his healings and exorcisms, is the sign of the kingdom of God at home. In other words, the eschatological kingdom has dawned and the signs of its coming are already apparent in the person and activity of Jesus, if only men have eyes to see and ears to hear.¹¹

Thus we arrive at a deeper understanding of Jesus' preaching about the future when we see it in its relation to the present. According to the evangelist Luke Jesus commenced his public ministry with a visit to his home-town Nazareth. On a Sabbath he read from the book of Isaiah 61 and said finally, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Lk. 4:21). Thus the 'zero hour' of which C. H. Dodd speaks is the hour of Jesus, the 'Mitte der Zeit' or the mid-point of salvation history.¹² "Blessed are the eyes which see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not

10. cfr. R. Schnackenburg: *Present and Future*, London, 1966, p. 4

11. cfr. O. Cullmann: *Christ and Time*, London, 1971, p. 151; J. L. McKenzie, *op. cit.* p. 480; R. H. Fuller: *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus*, London, 1970, p. 29

12. cfr. H. Conzelmann: *The Theology of St. Luke*, London, 1961. The German original has the title, "Die Mitte der Zeit."

hear it" (Lk. 10: 23-24). The present is the moment of salvation where the ancient prophecies approach fulfilment and in which the signs of world renewal, promised by God, come to light. "The law and the prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom is preached" (Lk. 16: 16). In the Lukan theology the old order has been wound up with the work of John the Baptizer who still belongs to the old covenant and since then a new order has been inaugurated which is the beginning of the eschatological age, a time of God's grace.¹³ It is characterized by 'good news' about the Kingdom of God. This is the last hour, the hour of decision. Jesus is sent with the final, decisive word. "Blessed is he who takes no offence at me" (Mt. 11: 6). A challenge is thrown and decision is inevitable for or against: "Follow me and leave the dead to bury their own dead" (Mt. 8, 22; cfr. Lk. 9: 62).

Nature of the kingdom

During the life-time of Jesus a misunderstanding dogged his mission to the end until he was put to death by the Romans as 'king of the Jews' (Mt. 27: 37 par.). Neither the synoptists nor John disavow this title to Jesus. As a matter of fact, when Pilate asked Jesus, "So you are a king?", Jesus replied, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice" (Jn. 18: 37). Yet it was a misunderstanding because the truth of the statement was distorted by a shift of level or perspective. In what then does the kingship of Christ and consequently of God consist? What is the nature of God's Kingdom?

The kingdom which Jesus proclaimed is a divine act, not a demand.¹⁴ It is the sovereign saving activity of God. It is God in action, God in conflict with evil through Jesus for man's salvation. "If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Lk. 11: 20; Mt. 12: 28). It is a divine crisis, nay the divine crisis, the crisis which gives meaning to all history; God in all power and

13. cfr. T. W. Manson: *The Teachings of Jesus*, Cambridge, 1967, p. 104

14. cfr. H. M. Hunter, *op. cit.* p. 76

majesty confronting individual man and woman and demanding response. Jesus proclaiming this kingdom invites his listeners to face this crisis, accept the challenge and take the decision to establish God's kingdom in their hearts. It is at the same time God's gift and not man's achievement. It is a kingdom with no worldly goal or ideal in view.

Therefore all values, treasures, goals belonging to the realm of the world or terrestrial realities, be they politics, civilization, human society, economic welfare do not come into the picture. However, this does not mean that Jesus spiritualized the idea of the kingdom of God in such a way as to make it relevant only to the inner life of the individual. Aloof in one sense, he was nevertheless engaged with contemporary life of his own nation.¹⁵ He did not reject the terrestrial realities as worthless nor even enjoined their renunciation because of ascetic zeal. Rather they disappear simply in the light which emanates from the kingdom of God.

Terrestrial realities in Jesus attitude and way of Life.

The centre of Jesus' proclamation, as we have seen, is the Kingdom of God, and all are pressingly invited to have a share in it. "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!" (Lk. 12: 49). It is the one thing which must take hold of a person. "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her" (Lk. 10: 41-42). The radicalism of this pronouncement, the exclusive insistence that "one thing is needful" devalued the claim of all other values. Jesus manifested such an attitude in his own way of life. For him the will of God was the supreme norm to which he surrendered in radical obedience,¹⁶ based on the absolute trust and confidence in his Father. His unquestioning obedience to the Father's will is ultimately to be traced to the effects of the unique spiritual experience in his life, a profound and intense religious experience of God the Father as a present living reality.¹⁷

15. cfr. C. H. Dodd, *op. cit.* p. 94

16. cfr. R. Bultmann: *Jesus and the Word*, New York, 1954, p. 103

17. cfr. T. W. Manson, *op. cit.* p. 105

Jesus' unconditional surrender to God's will determined his attitude towards terrestrial realities. It devalued the claims of all other duties, secular, worldly, terrestrial or even religious. Jesus gave expression to this devaluation in his own life. He transgressed the sabbatical rest when he felt that God made him act; He defended the disciples against rigorous custom of fasting; he took a stand regarding the burning national question whether one had really to pay tax to the foreign power of occupation; he viewed it as a secular concern and pointed his questioners to the essential duty: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Mk. 12: 17 par.).

Jesus enjoined on his followers to follow his path of surrender and radical obedience. Such an attitude judges everything in the world in the light of this one thing, namely, God and His Kingdom. The present age is eschatological. It is the hour of crisis, the hour of decision. "You know what hour it is, how it is full time *Kairos* now for you to wake from sleep. For our salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed" (Rom. 13: 11). God's will comes before all other interests and ties. "A woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, 'blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts you sucked!' But he said, 'blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it' (Lk. 11:27). "Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mk. 3: 35).

From this it does not necessarily follow that Jesus set out to lay aside the terrestrial realities nor abolish wealth or possessions. In Jesus' attitude the world and its goods are not deprived of their intrinsic value. Jesus does not reject the good things of the world. His way of life was contrasted to that of John the Baptizer.¹⁸ He only showed that the terrestrial realities are irrelevant to the life of the Age to come.

Terrestrial realities in the preaching of Jesus

Thus in Jesus' attitude terrestrial realities are not deprived of their value because of dualistic pessimism as if the world is bad in itself. It is true that one hardly finds any direct teaching about the positive values of the goods of the world,

18. cfr. Mt. 11: 16-19 par.

but one does not find either a categorical and unreserved condemnation of these realities. A proper and balanced evaluation of Jesus' teaching regarding terrestrial realities can be fairly had when one bears in mind the theology of the Fatherhood of God in the New Testament. Jesus teaches that God is concerned with things infinitely great and infinitely little. The disciples must place their utter trust in God's providence. Their utter security in heavenly Father's care is depicted by Jesus in the incomparable images of the birds of the air and the flowers of the field.¹⁹ "Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" (Mt. 6: 26; cfr. also vv. 28ff). Everything from the one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves to the daily provision for the least of his creatures is the object of His care. The providence of the Father covers the whole life of man. Jesus teaches men about the Father by teaching them to pray to the Father to submit their whole life to his loving care and holy purpose.²⁰

The teaching of Jesus on the Fatherhood of God is best summed up in the Lord's Prayer. This prayer in fact is a complete statement of what God's children should desire and ask of their Father in heaven. In it we are invited to ask what is needful and adequate for the requirements and satisfying of not only our spiritual but also our material existence. "Give us today our daily bread." Material needs are necessary for a full life, and the heavenly Father gives them to all who ask. "If you, then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" (Mt. 7, 11; Lk. 11, 13). "Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well" (Mt. 6:33). True, terrestrial realities do not directly pertain to God's Kingdom, but they are helpful to pursue one's goal, provided one recognizes their relative value in view of the kingdom which one is invited to seek first, and the

19. cfr. J. Jeremias: *The Parables of Jesus*, London, 1972, p. 214

20. cfr. T. W. Manson, *op. cit.* p. 115

heavenly Father will add to man what is necessary. Man should not unduly seek them because they can deviate him from his goal and purpose; they can even be harmful.

In this context Jesus warns against anxiety over possessions because they keep man from recognizing God's claim upon their life. Consequently his words about 'riches' are sharp. Here he is thinking of the brute rich man of the Orient.²¹ The rich fool who thinks he need not fear bad harvest for many years is a fool, that is, who denies God.²² Earthly possessions are transitory things which "moth and rust consume and which thieves break in and steal." (Mt. 6:19f.). They are *mamona tes adikias* unrighteous mammon who belongs to the world (Lk. 16:9-11). The evil in the possessions consists in this that it claims its possessor and makes him a slave and robs him of the freedom to decide for God. Jesus sees this danger so great that he says that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" (Mk. 10:25), because they become a fetter to man. Of course, riches can be used for the service to the common good, but Jesus is not referring to this aspect. Such ideas are completely outside the thought of Jesus. His words indeed say plainly that whoever follows him must have the strength and freedom to renounce his possessions. But it is equally plain that he does not mean to say that by voluntary poverty a man wins for himself a special quality in the sight of God; not poverty but surrender is demanded, because the eschatological hour demands it.²³ Reference to the eschatological hour only brings to radical expression what God is always and everywhere demanding from men in the way of decision. It is the decision between God and the world that the rich man avoids. It is from this point that Jesus warns against riches and possessions. He did not preach as such against possessions. Let it be recalled that his public ministry was made possible, to some extent, by the material help of those among his followers who had means (cfr. Lk. 8:

21. cfr. J. Jeremias: *New Testament Theology*, Vol. 1, London, 1972, p. 223; cfr. also Amos 4:1-3; 6:1-7 etc.

22. cfr. Lk. 12:16-20; Ps. 14, 1,

23. cfr. R. Bultmann, *op. cit.* p. 98

1ff.). But he experienced the fact, as we all do only too often, that possessions can come between man and God. To these men of wealth his words apply: "woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation" (Lk. 6:24).

Conclusion

In the introduction we saw that man, by ordering, building and developing the world, continues the divine work of creation. By realizing himself doing this task, man is placing himself at the heart of salvation, because, in the perspective of salvation-history, from creation through Israel's history to Christ's redemptive work, every event is a work of salvation²⁴. Mastering the earth, as the P tradition bids man to do, is a work of salvation. Salvation embraces the whole man. This finds echo also in the Pope's encyclical 'populorum progressio': "The integral development of man extends, without discontinuity, from the possession of what he needs to communion with the Lord, the fulness of the salvific work."

However, a Christian must keep the perspectives of Jesus as outlined in our essay clearly before him. He lives in a world concerning which he knows that it will pass away (1 Cor. 7:31), but he knows also that it has its divinely willed place in the framework of redemptive history and is ruled by Christ. In so far as he knows that it will pass away, he denies it; in so far as he knows that it is the divinely willed framework of the present stage of redemptive history, he affirms it.

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24. cfr. Eph. 1:3; Jn. 1; Col 1:15-20; G. Gutiérrez Merring, *art. cit.* p. 145

Terrestrial Realities: their Liberation

The doctrine of the cosmic fall is implicit in the biblical record from Gen. 3 (where the ground is cursed because of man's sin) to Rev. 22 (where the curse is no more); it is even demanded by any world-view which endeavours to do justice to the biblical doctrine of creation and the facts of life as we know them. Man is part of nature which, when created, was good but has been subjected to frustration and futility by sin; however, it will ultimately be redeemed. St. Paul in Rom. 8 : 18-22 expresses this hope: terrestrial realities will be liberated from bondage.

In the background of the apostle's thought lies that one great event which brought him to faith in Christ. The new personal relation of Paul to his Lord was thenceforth the motive power which influenced his whole life and thought. This basic attitude of his is forcefully expressed when he grants a share in Christ's redemptive work even to material creation, which he of-course personifies and puts on a par with the community of believers.

Paul wants to explain why anxiety and longing are phenomena common to every man; every man has to face sufferings, and the believers particularly have their own specific sufferings. Such a condition, the apostle believes, is the result of sin, even if not of one's own personal sin. Man errs, falls into sin. Along with guilty man, irrational creation too falls under the sentence of condemnation: creation is not guilty, certainly – just ill-fated.¹ For Paul God's word to Adam, "Cursed is the ground because of you" (Gen. 3 : 17) is something that affects material creation in its totality.

1. K. H. Schelkle, *Theology of the New Testament. I. Creation* (Minnesota, 1971) p. 35.

Nevertheless creation along with man will experience redemption. It will acquire freedom and glory, that is, the full and unlimited actuality of life. We may find the thought of the apostle more understandable if we take cognizance of the fact that he shares in a long tradition. His explanation goes back to the biblical account of the first man's sin and the punishment inflicted on him for sin, a punishment that creation shares along with the first man. Dating from approximately the same time as the epistle to the Romans, the apocryphal writing known as the fourth book of Esdras² states its lament in a similar fashion; God is introduced as telling the sage the old story: "When Adam transgressed my decrees, the creation came under judgment. The entrances to this world were made narrow, painful and arduous, few and evil, full of perils and grinding hardship . . ." (2:11 f.) And the Rabbis on their part teach: "Although things have been created in their finest, nevertheless, they were spoiled when the first man sinned; and they shall not be restored to their order any sooner than when the Messiah shall come."³

According to the apostle's thought, man and the world are bound together most closely as companions in their fortunes and misfortunes; he is fully convinced that the world and man are as one, in guilt and punishment, in redemption and salvation. Man is liberated, not from the world, but along with the world.⁴ The biblical point of view with regard to the history of salvation is that Christ's work benefits not only man but also material creation. Filled as he is with eschatological hope, Paul lends life and feeling to material creation. "He is one of those (like St. Francis of Assisi) to whom is given to read as it were the thoughts of plants and animals. He seems to lay his ear to the earth and the confused murmur which he hears has a meaning for him: it is creation's yearning for that happier state intended for it and of which it has been defrauded."⁵ Paul no-

2, It is also known as the second book of Esdras.

3. As quoted by Schelkle, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

4. Schelkle, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

5, W. Sanday-A. C. Headlam, *The Epistle to the Romans* (The International Critical Commentary, 5th ed., repr., Edinburgh, 1950) p. 212.

where speaks of a new earth and a new heaven but only interprets the wishes of mute creation, certain that the state of vanity to which sin has brought it will cease at the moment appointed for the final consummation.

With these remarks serving to clarify the context, we shall examine the more important elements in the apostles words in Rom. 8 : 18-22. The world of creation waits with eager longing for the revelation of the sons of God. The Greek expression *apokaradokia*, which occurs too in Phil. 1 : 20 along with *elpis*, "hope", is highly expressive: in the literal sense it points to the action of waiting with outstretched head; it involves a straining forward. It can, by virtue of the preposition *apo*, "from", also convey the idea of diversion from other things and concentration on a single object.⁶

"Creation", *ktisis*, can have three meanings: 1) the act of creating; 2) the result of that act, namely, a) the aggregate of created things; b) the individual created thing.⁷ In v. 19 *ktisis* denotes the aggregate of material things brought into being by God. The apostle adds to the word the definite article, thus bringing it into contrast with "the sons of God". Some commentators have understood by the term the world of man, but this is unjustified; what is meant is the whole of irrational creation, a sense demanded by the clear reference in vv. 19-21 to Gen. 3 : 17. The poetic and penetrating imagination of Paul sees in the marks of imperfection on the face of nature, in the signs at once of high capacities and poor achievements, the visible and audible expression of a sense of something wanting which will one day be supplied.⁸

The revealing of the sons of God will be the signal for the redemption of the material world. The "sons of God" are the redeemed, those who through faith have become sharers in the fruits of Christ's redemptive work. They are thought of as appearing as a group and presenting themselves to material creation which is itself personified. Sharing in Christ's merits

6. Sanday-Headlam, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

7. Sanday-Headlam, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

8. Sanday-Headlam, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

makes one son, and the full disclosure of this sonship will take place only at the moment of the parousia. The created world is eagerly waiting for it. In the Greek original there is the compound verb *apekdechetai*, which conveys the idea of concentrated waiting.⁹

The idea of revelation in v. 19 has its roots in the apocalyptic traditions of Judaism, and in its messianic expectations. The following passages from 4 Esdras are typical: "The man you saw rising from the depths of the sea is the one whom the Most High has held in readiness through many ages; he will himself deliver the world he has made, and determine the lot of those who survive... The day is near when the Most High will begin to bring deliverance to those on earth. Then men will be filled with great alarm... When this happens, and all the signs I have shown you come to pass, then my son will be revealed..." (13: 26. 29. 32). The future glory is seen as belonging in the first place to the children of God, but Paul insists that the whole of creation is also to be glorified with them. God's call to man does not isolate him from the rest of creation but rather invites him to a "new creation" (2 Cor. 5: 17).

All temporal, created things bear witness to the truth that the time in which we are living is the time of the divine *now*, and that it bears in its womb the eternal, living, unborn future. The language of creatures and elements, of worlds above and beyond the times both near and far turns out to be, when once it is deciphered, a strangely human tongue.¹⁰ And this seemingly human feeling of hope found in material creation can be understood also as the pressing forward of nature to mankind—that men are necessary for nature's redemption. Material creation waits together with us, —no, for us.¹¹ As one analyses in depth v. 19, one is forced to agree with Calvin who has made the following observation: "There is no fragment or particle of the world, which in the grip of the knowledge of its present misery, does not hope for resurrection."¹²

9. Sanday-Headlam, *op. cit.*, *ibid.*

10. K. Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Oxford, 1968) p. 307.

11. Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

12. As cited by Barth, *op. cit.*, *ibid.*

Let us now pass on to v. 20 and study the term "vanity" so as to understand its nature and implications in the present context. The Greek word *mataiotēs* would mean "that which is without result, ineffective, that which does not reach its end". The word is adequate to express the disappointing character of the present state of existence, which nowhere reaches the perfection of which it is capable.¹³ It is the antonym of *teleios*, "perfect". In addition to the idea of futility and frustration, *mataiotēs*, as elsewhere in the Septuagint, can also convey the idea of the worship of the heathen gods (Acts 14 : 15), but Paul is not following in v. 20 this tradition. He is consciously or unconsciously following the tradition of the book of Ecclesiastes, whose theme is the vanity of everything under the sun: *mataiotēs mataiotētōn*, "vanity of vanities" (1 : 2). What is in question here is the experience of meaninglessness, absurdity, which has been highlighted by modern thought.

The subjection to vanity took place "by reason of him who subjected it". Who is the person that did this work of subjecting the material world to meaninglessness? It is not man in general, nor Adam, nor the devil,¹⁴ but with most commentators both modern and ancient, we must say, it is God. There are two reasons for saying so: first, the subjection is "in hope", which no sinister or finite power is able to do; second, Paul follows here the tradition of Gen. 3: 17. The vanity of the creatures is not, however, "willing vanity",¹⁵ i. e., left to itself it would never have chosen the condition of *mataiotēs*. It is subject to vanity by reason of the one who has the right and power to punish man for his sin.

"In hope", *ep'elpidi*; the word *elpis*, "hope", occurs elsewhere too in the letter to the Romans, denoting the sum-total of all the expectations the Christian has for the future. It is produced by *dokimē*, the character that arises in a person who had to face hardships and trials, the toughness that is so typical of the veteran. The hope that is born of character will never prove illusory since God's love is the believer's surest

13. Sanday-Headlam, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

14. Sanday-Headlam, *op. cit.*, *ibid.*

15. Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 308

guarantee of all his expectations (Rom. 5: 4f.). Paul transfers the experience of Christian hope on to the material world.

In sum, the vanity present in the whole of creation is not this or that particular pain or abomination or absence of beauty, not even the sum of observable disadvantages attaching to the world as we see it. For the believer it is understandable apart from God. The suffering, to which the whole created world of men and things is subjected, is his action, his question and his answer.¹⁶ For this reason the creature is placed under hope. Where the origin of the vanity of the cosmos is understood as the unobservable call the creator issues forth to his creature, there emerges hope, hope of the restoration of the unobservable union between the creator and the creature, through the death and resurrection of Christ.

In the Greek original v. 21 begins with the particle *hoti*, which can mean both "because" and "that". Instead of the meaning "because", exegetes generally suggest the conjunction "that", and the clause which it introduces is taken as directly dependent on "in hope" at the end of v. 20.¹⁷ For the second time the word *ktisis*, preceded by the definite article and the demonstrative pronoun *autē*, is used in the present verse; the expression is emphatic. The *ktisis* will itself be freed from bondage to corruption.

Bondage, *douleia*, the state or condition of slave, in v. 21 stands as a parallel to the expression "was subjected" in v. 20, and decay, corruption, *phthora* is the antithesis of *doxa*, "glory". Glory is something to be revealed at the moment of the eschatological consummation, and it is described by the apostle as an integral part of the *eleutheria*, "freedom" of the children of God. The usual rendering "glorious liberty of the children of God" does not bring out the force of the original. The "liberty of glory" in question here must be interpreted in the light of Rom. 3:23, where it is said that all men, by reason of their sin, "fall short of the glory of God". According to the tradition of the Rabbis, Adam by his sin lost six favours God had bestowed

16. Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

17. Sanday-Headlam, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

upon him, the first of which was glory, the rest being immortality, stature (which was higher than that of his descendants), fruit of the field, fruits of trees, and light (by which the world was created)¹⁸. They taught that this glory was a reflection of God's own glory, that it made Adam's face resplendent. In v. 21 glory means the restoration of fallen man to the state before sin, a restoration that is defined as freedom.

Freedom is a key-concept of the letter to the Galatians. Christians are in possession of it by virtue of their faith in Christ (2:4); the Saviour, by doing away with the Mosaic law, has set them free so that they may enjoy freedom (5:1); their call has been a call to freedom (5:13). In the verse we are analysing freedom, which is the antithesis of bondage, is synonymous with the believer's sharing through faith in Christ's work of redemption, and it is this sharing that liberates him from bondage, and restores to him the glory that he had lost through sin.

If we are to state in prosaic terms of metaphysics what Paul thought would happen, we might say that he shared with his Jewish contemporaries the belief that, in the age of consummation, the material universe would be transformed into a substance consisting of the pure light of glory, thus returning to its original perfection as created by God. But Paul has made of this truly poetical conception which is not at all dependent on any particular metaphysics, the vehicle to convey a specific point of his theology. What this transformation means in the realm of fact and logic, it is impossible to say; nor can one argue about its exact nature.¹⁹ We can only say, just as creation is bound with man to corruption, so also it is bound with him to salvation, and will be freed with him from transiency and death.

V. 22 begins with the phrase, "we know", which involves an appeal to the reader's own personal experience. Paul is therefore speaking about something of which the believer is already

18. Sanday-Headlam, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

19. C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (London, 1959) p. 148.

cognizant, namely, material creation's groaning. The present verse points back to v. 19 where mention was made of the *apokaradokia* of creation; the nature of this eager longing is clarified further in v. 22 with the help of the two compound verbs *sustenazei* and *sunōdinei*, consisting of the preposition *sun*, "with, together with", and the verbal roots *stenazō*, "to sigh often, sigh deeply, groan, moan", and *ōdinō*, "to have the pains of childbirth, be in labour". Note that the subject of the two verbs is *ktisis* in all its totality: the word occurs in the present section for the third time.

V. 22 speaks most graphically of the groaning and agony of creation. The created world has a solidarity in the pain of transitoriness, futility and frustration, but this pain includes hope because in the world that is passing away the new creation is being formed. Paul may have in mind the Jewish tradition regarding the birth pangs of the Messiah, i. e., the period of distress in the last times which will precede the ushering in of the messianic age.²⁰ The troubles of the last times are compared to the pangs experienced by the woman who is giving birth. The universe feels pain in every part and cries out in agony, but at the same time it is looking forward to the joy that will follow when travail is no more and the child is born.

Not only is nature groaning; but Christians too, inasmuch as they are not yet in possession of the object of their hope, are groaning (v. 23). They are looking forward to their adoption as sons, and as this is still a thing of the indefinite future, they are sighing and mourning. Adoption is defined as "the redemption of our body". Redemption, *apolutrōsis*, means liberation from slavery through the payment of a ransom, and Paul uses this term to describe Christ's work which involves man's liberation from bondage to sin. The *apolutrōsis* of the body in v. 23 therefore means our deliverance from the curse recorded in Gen. 3:19.

Man is subject to corruption, deliverance from which will take place at the moment of the parousia when material creation will itself be liberated from its bondage to decay. Glory, revelation of the sons of God, freedom, sonship and redemption of

20. F. F. Bruce, *Romans* (The Tyndale NT Commentaries, London, 1969) p. 173.

the body all point, in concrete, to one and the same reality, for whose disclosure the material world and man are together waiting with eager longing. That the disclosure will take place is the firm assurance given by hope, but since that which is thus assured is a thing of the future the two companions go on groaning together.

From our study of St. Paul's account of creation's groaning in Rom. 8: 19-22 we can draw some conclusions that have bearing upon the Christian believer's attitude towards terrestrial realities.

Paul sees the power of sin extended even over irrational creatures, because they suffer in union with man who is their king. And as man is called to glorification, we can very well conclude that material creation too is called to the same goal, to be realized through sharing in Christ's work of redemption. Ultimately this eschatological expectation is bound up with the work of Christ in the history of salvation.

And this naturally leads us to the conclusion that the realities of the material world have a special destiny, that is, to share with man in the fruits of Christ's work.

God has not only entrusted the whole of visible creation to man's immediate, active and effective dominion but has also made him the centre and focal point of this world. Hence creation in its own way shares in man's destiny and in his servitude to sin, with the disastrous consequences of pain, death and dissolution. Therefore, if man recaptures the freedom of the children of God and abides in it, not only he himself but the entire creation will experience the liberation from servitude. This is precisely because of man's solidarity with creation at large.

Man's solidarity with his environment is yet another reason. In distress as well as in hope there is a close and intimate relationship not only between man's physical and spiritual power but also between man and the whole of his environment. Consequently man who is in possession of the precious gift of redemption should create such an imprint on the

world he lives in, an imprint that will make it feel that the liberation from corruption and decay has already commenced.

Even now man who by his selfish exploitation can turn the good earth into a dust bowl, can by responsible trusteeship make the desert blossom into a garden.

What will be the impact of completely redeemed mankind on material creation which has been entrusted to its care? This is well echoed in Is. xx 11: 9. The transformation of the universe depends upon the completion of man's own transformation through the working of divine grace.

In the light of all this we can assert the intrinsic value and worth of the whole of creation. Luther, studying Paul in Rom. 8: 19-22, has the following remark to make: "In every creature St. Paul with his sharp, apostolic eye perceived the holy and beloved Cross."²¹

Teilhard de Chardin,²² following the Pauline tradition, expresses his conviction that through Christ the world will acquire its ultimate unity and cohesion. He holds that the whole world is oriented towards Christ. The entire world order is to be discovered in Paul's words: "Everything is yours, you are Christ's and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3: 23). Transposed into Teilhard's vocabulary, this statement of the apostle may be thus enunciated: cosmogenesis eventuates through biogenesis in a noogenesis, which is itself consummated in a christogenesis. The world is then an instrument for realizing the total Christ.

Being so, Christ must necessarily exert his radiating influence over the entire creation, though his dominion remains supernatural. Enobled by the redeeming touch of Christ, the entire creation is holy and sacred.

This fact calls forth man's responsibility to christify and sanctify material creation, while working for his own redemption

21. Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 310.

22. Cf. his various works which are easily available in paperback editions.

in Christ. The human condition calls him to prepare for God's ultimate break-through by the "building up" of the finite world, for instance, through rapidly revolutionizing technological skills, increased egalitarian internationalism, and hopefully through increased humanness and tolerance. And the Church, despite its weakness and frailty, must continue to function as the sign of God's coming kingdom; it must witness to the truth about the destiny and character of the world process.²³

The grand vision of the whole saved creation should not, however, leave the Christian unmoved in the present. If creation is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God, then those who now call themselves sons of God, have to take their responsibility for creation with a new awareness, with a fresh seriousness. The world which is passing on to salvation has, therefore, a certain future, and it is the duty of Christians to proclaim it clearly together with all its practical consequences.

Always

David Francis

23. W. C. Shepherd, *Man's Condition. God and the World Process* (New York, 1969) p. 262.

Terrestrial Realities: the Tradition of the Aryans

By the appellation Aryans we mean the Indo-Iranians of antiquity, i. e., the groups of tribes that came from the West, occupied Iran and the north-western areas of the Indian subcontinent, and settled down there. These newcomers called themselves *ārya-*,¹ a name which in all likelihood means "free ones, nobles ones",² and it is the purpose of this study to examine briefly what they thought about the good things of this life. The main sources at our disposal for the study of the Aryans' attitude towards terrestrial realities are the Vedas, and particularly the *R̥gveda*, and the Avesta, and our discussions (which are not intended to be exhaustive but only suggestive) will be confined to these two monuments of Aryan culture.

1. On the formation of the term, cf. J. Wackernagel - A. Debrunner, *Altindische Grammatik* II/2 (Göttingen, 1967) § 38 (p. 127). Incidentally, *Eire*, "Ireland," is a cognate of the term under consideration.

2. This interpretation is based upon the evidence of Hittite which attests the adjective *arawa-*, "free" (cf. E. Laroche, *arawa-*, 'libre', "Hommages à Georges Dumézil" [Brussels, 1960] pp. 124-28. J. Friedrich, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch* [Indogermanische Bibliothek. II Reihe: Wörterbücher, Heidelberg, 1952] p. 29); compare too Lycian *ereua-*, corresponding to Greek *eleu-* in *eleutheros*, "free." P. Thieme, *Der Fremdling im R̥gveda Eine Studie über die Bedeutung der Worte ari, arya, aryaman und ārya* (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 23/2, Leipzig, 1938) that *ārya-*, the *vrddhi* form of *ārya-*, goes back to *ari-* (from Indo-European *ali-*; cf. Latin *ali-us*, and Greek *allos*, from *aly-os*), "foe, stranger, alien," and through a semantic somersault, "host, the hospitable one;" *ārya-* is therefore the hospitable one. For defence of this view against criticisms, cf. Thieme, "Vorzara-thustrisches bei den Zarathustriern und bei Zarathustra", *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 107 (1957) pp. 67-104 (pp. 96-104).

I

The Ṛgveda (abbr. RV), as Rudolph Roth the great Vedic scholar pointed out in the last century, embodies the songs the Aryans of India were using when they were “invoking prosperity on themselves and on their flock,.... and.... rendering thanks to the heavenly beings for preservation in battle.”³ True, the hymns, for the most part, are laudatory in nature, praising the gods for what they are or for what they have done, but at the same time they are also so many expressions of the poet’s innermost desires, wishes, yearnings and aspirations; this means that the RV embodies a veritable anthropology, with emphasis on the realities of this world and their bearing upon man’s life here on earth.⁴ The first Veda has, then, a great anthropological interest.

The Aryans regarded themselves as creatures of the powers on high: a poet confesses that Dyāus, “Sky”, is his father and begetter and Pṛthvī, “Earth”, his mother (1: 164: 33), and another poet with a philosophical bent of mind speaks of *viśvam ekam*, “one-all”, that is the *Urvater* or *primaeval* father (3:54:8f.). According to a very old tradition of the Indo-Iranians mankind originated from the union of Yama the first man with Yamī his sister,⁵ and since this myth proved unpalatable to the Vedic poets they radically modified it, making the brother brush away the amorous advances of his sister (10: 10: 12).

3. The statement cited above occurs in his epoch-making little book *Abhandlungen zur Literatur und Geschichte des Weda* (Stuttgart, 1848); English text in A. Weber, *The History of Indian Literature* (4th ed., London, 1904) p. 8.

4. On Vedic man, cf. R. N. Dandekar, *Der vedische Mensch. Studien zur Selbstauffassung des Inders im Ṛg-und Atharvaveda* (Heidelberg, 1938).

5. In the Avesta too there appears Yima along with his sister Yimeh (exhaustive discussions in A. Christensen, *Les types du premier home et du premier roi dans l'histoire legendaire des Iraniens I-II* (Leiden-Uppsala, 1917-34). Later Iranian mythology recounts how mankind originated from the *primaeval* twins *masya* (= Sanskrit *martya*-), “man,” and from *masyāne* (feminine form of the former).

The sages designate man as *manu*, *manuṣya*, *jana*, *praja*, and so on. The etymology of *manu*⁶ is not at all clear, which is certainly unfortunate inasmuch as we are now left in the dark about the basic sense of an important term. Readers may find it interesting to learn that Gothic *mannu*, Old High German *man* and English *man* are cognates of the Sanskrit word; compare too the Avestan proper name *Manuṣ cithra*, "descended from Manu." The Germanic peoples claimed that they were descendants of *Mannus*, "Man." The remaining two terms, which go back to the common Indo-European (abbr. IE.) base *g'en-*⁷ "to beget, generate, engender, give birth", define man as the being that has come into existence through the process of generation.

The Vedic sages speak of man's *atman*, *asu*, *kratu*, *manas*, *tanu*, etc., thus accentuating the fact that he is a many-sided, composite and even mysterious being. The word *atman*, about whose origin there is no consensus among

6. Discussions in M. Mayrhofer, *Kurze fascies etymologischer Wörterbuch des Altindischen II* (Indogermanische Bibliothek II, Bonn: Wackernagel, Heidelberg, 1963) pp. 375f. Wackernagel and Debrunner, *op. cit.*, § 290 (p. 472). It is unlikely that the present term is connected with *man-* (IE *men-*), "to think", as has been suggested, for example, by H. E. Nyberg, *Die Religionen des Alten Iran* (Münchener Studien der Vorderasiatisch-Ägyptischen Gesellschaft 43 repr., Göttingen, 1966) pp. 126f. (cf. too Wackernagel and Debrunner, *op. cit.*, p. 336, *Nachtrag* to p. 472). In Indian mythology *Manu* arose, as a result of the personification of the word *manu*, the figure of *Manu* the first man; traces of the vast complex of mythology in which *Manu* is no longer central in Iran as witness as well, cf. Christensen, "Fatah von *Manu* Legende in der iranischen Literatur", *Festschrift F. C. Andreas* (Leipzig, 1916) pp. 62 ff.

7. Correspondence in J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch I* (Bonn, 1959), pp. 373-74.

specialists,⁸ should not be understood in the philosophical sense: the RV means by it only what we call life, principle of life, or in common jargon, soul. The second term, denoting man's life, his *élan vital*, goes back to IE *ṛsu-*, "orenda, intensified life force"; man as *asu-* is the breathing creature,⁹ a definition which is amply borne out by the verbal root *aniti* (thematic *anati*), "breathes." Gradually the word *asu-* came to be replaced by *manas-*,¹⁰ from the root *man-* (IE *men-*); the noun form denotes the special activity implied by the base,¹¹ and then also that which exercises this activity; compare the meanings in the RV, "soul, thought," etc. As for *kratu-*,¹² which can possibly be a cognate of Greet *kratos*, it conveys the idea of power, vigour, understanding, will, etc., and especially too that of the inner force which enables a man to mould his life and conduct in accordance with *rta-* or truth.¹³

The element *tanū-*,¹⁴ "body, person, self", is the most important constituent of man. The etymology of the term is a

8. Various suggestions in A. Thumb-R. Hauschild, *Handbuch des Sanskrit* II (Indogermanische Bibliothek. I. Reihe: Lehr- und Handbücher, 3rd ed., Heidelberg, 1953) pp. 181 f. Cf. too Wackernagel-Debrunner, *op. cit.*, § 512 (p. 697); § 608 c Anm. (p. 766).

9. The equivalents in Avestan are *anhu-* and *ahu-*, "life, existence" (cf. Wackernagel-Debrunner, *op. cit.*, § 289 [p. 474]).

10. From IE *menos*; cf. Greek *meros*, "might, force, strength, courage, prowess" (compare too Sanskrit *manyu-*, "wrath"). Neuter nouns in *-as-*, which are quite common in Sanskrit, represent a type of formation going back to the parent-language (Wackernagel-Debrunner, *op. cit.*, § 122 [pp. 219-247]).

11. Correspondences in Pokorny, *op. cit.*, pp. 726-28.

12. Exhaustive discussions in K. Rönnow, "Ved. *kratu-*, eine wortgeschichtliche Untersuchung," *Le monde oriental* 26 (1932) pp. 1-90.

13. Cf. discussions in the next section (cf. too n. 47).

14. This form is found in Avestan as well, with the meanings "body, person, self", etc. Compare Wackernagel-Debrunner, *op. cit.*, § 316 (p. 490), where reference is made to *tanuh* "person" (neuter noun occurring in RV 5:93:23); on the alternation between *-u-* and *-ū-*, cf. *ibid.*, § 321 (pp. 497 f.). The word is in all likelihood a derivative of *tan-* (cf. *tanoti*), from IE *ten-*, "to expand, spread, extend."

matter of dispute, though the general sense it has in the RV is beyond dispute, and we must also add here that the sages view the body positively. 10: 163, which is a charm meant for healing various ailments,¹⁵ gives a detailed catalogue of the parts of the human body, and 10: 157: 2 is a prayer for the body's well-being: "Our sacrifice, our bodies (*nas tanvam*) and our offspring, may Indra... preserve"; the same poem elicits the wish that Indra be *avitā tanūnām* (stanza 3), "protector of our bodies." There is need to strengthen the body (compare 10: 59: 5), and it must also be well cared for (compare 10: 128: 1); nay, it has to be beautified too! In 10: 95, the hymn that purports to be the record of a dialogue between Purūravas and Urvaśī, the latter makes the remark (stanza 3): "Like swans (*ātayo*)¹⁶ they (the celestial nymphs) show the beauty of their bodies" (*tanvah śumbhata*).¹⁷ Man is, then, a body-person, and the idea that the body is the prison of the soul is altogether foreign to the perspectives of the Vedic poets. They were wont to demand of the dead man just cremated to assume a new body according to his wish (10: 15: 14).¹⁸

The body has naturally to be fed with good food, and we know that the sages of antiquity were very particular about it. They would never have countenanced the view that the body should be subjected to extreme forms of asceticism, and they would also have branded as fools those who taught that the

15. The present poem, dealing with *vakṣmaghnam* or the cure of a man suffering from consumption (cf. K. F. Geldner, *Der Rig-Veda* [Harvard Oriental Series 35, Harvard, 1951] p. 390), occurs too in AV 2:33, though in a some-what altered form.

16. The term *āti-* is a hapax legomenon in the first Veda, and the particular variety of bird it denotes is anything but clear; compare the cognates Greek *nēssa*, "swan" "Latin *anas*, id., etc. (K. Brugmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der indogermanischen Sprachen* I/1 [repr., Berlin, 1968] § 452. 2 [p. 419]).

17. The verbal form *śumbhata* is from the base *śubh-* (IE *k'eu-bh-*), "to be adorned, shine, glitter"; compare the common nouns *śobha-* and *śobhana-*, "brilliance, splendour". The root *k'eu-bh-*, surviving also in Armenian *surb*, "pure, holy", is a cognate of *k'eu-dh-* (= Sanskrit *śudh-*), "to be pure".

18. Geldner, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

body should be destroyed by every possible means available to the seeker after liberation. It is not necessary to describe here the food habits of the Aryans, but instead we shall confine ourselves to a few remarks about the use of beef.¹⁹ That the Aryans held the bovine species in high esteem is clear not only from the Vedas but also from the Avesta, and we know too that Zarathushtra (or Zoroaster, according to Greek tradition), the prophet and reformer of Iran (who was never a worshipper of cows), condemned in strong terms the indiscreet slaughter of kine at the time of cult.²⁰ And later Sanskrit source do evince some sort of aversion to cow slaughter, even for the purpose of sacrifice; compare the following injunction given by the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa: "Let him not eat the flesh of either the cow or ox; for the cow and the ox doubtless support everything here on earth" (3: 1: 2: 3).

The section where the passage just cited occurs comes to a close with a remark of the well-known sage Yājñavalkya that he ate the meat of milch cows (*dhenu-*) and bullocks (*anaduha-*), provided it was *amsala-*, "tender" (3: 1: 2: 21).²¹ The

19. Detailed discussions in L. Alsdorf, *Beiträge zur Geschichte von Vegetarismus und Rindverehrung in Indien* (Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur zu Mainz, Abhandlungen der Gistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse, Jahrgang 1961, Nr. 6, Wiesbaden, 1962).

20. Compare the account of his vocation as prophet in Yasna 29, where the cow's soul prays to God to grant it a protector and defender; short discussion of the poem in Luke, "God's Call and the Concept of the 'Man of God' in extra-Biblical Religions", *Vocation: God's Call to Man* (National Vocation Service Centre Research Series No. 1, Poona, 1975) pp. 9-14. The same poem is studied from a special point of view by Dumezil, "A propos de la plainte de l'âme du boeuf (Yasna 29)", *Bulletin de l'Académie Royale de Belgique* 51 (1965) pp. 23-51.

21. On the meaning of the term used by the sage, cf. J. Eggeling, *The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* (The Sacred Books of the East 26, repr., Delhi, 1969) p. 11. The word, formed as it is from *amsa-*, "shoulder" (= Greek *ōmos*, Latin *humerus*, Armenian *us*, Gothic *ams*, etc.), literally means "strong-shouldered" and is used of cattle, but with reference to meat the sense can only be "tender".

significance of this utterance, representing a current of tradition dating from hoary antiquity, can never be exaggerated by the student of history. Another equally significant statement occurs in the same Brāhmaṇa: "Indeed the best food (*paramam annadyam*) is *māmsam* flesh" (11: 7: 1: 3)! The common Sanskrit word *anna-* (from *ad-na-*),²² denotes food in general, and of its numerous varieties that man has at his disposal, the pride of place is assigned to fleshmeat. The Indo-Europeans were meateaters, and that is the reason why their languages employ the same term for meat: the cognates of *māmsa-* (IE *mēmso-*)²³ are Tocharian *misa-*, Gothic *mimz*, Old Prussian *mensā*, Latvian *miesa*, Old Slavic *me(m)so*, etc. A slight change of meaning has taken place in Greek and Latin: the former attests *mēninx* (IE *mēmso-*, or *mēsno-*), "hide, skin," and *mēros* (IE *mēmso-* or *mēsro-*), "hip thigh, and the latter *membrum* (IE *mēmso-*), "skin." Reference may finally be made to Old Irish *mīr*, "bite, piece." We wish also to point out that the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa mentions a special preparation called *māmsaudana-* (11: 5: 7: 5), a dish consisting of meat cooked with rice.

The RV speaks of *atithinīr gāh* (10: 68: 3), "cows for the guest," i. e., not cows to be offered as presents or gifts but rather the ones to be slaughtered for the meal to be given to the guest who has just arrived. The god Agni is *ukṣānnāya vaṣ-ānnāya* (8: 43: 11), "eater of oxen and cows," an epithet that is found also in the Atharvaveda (10:86:14),²⁴ Even the press-stones used for the preparation of soma are said to make a humming sound over the meat that has been cooked (10: 85: 9). We know from the evidence of the Avesta that the soma sacrifice was accompanied by kine slaughter,²⁵ and the remark about the press-stones must be understood against the background of the traditions of Iran. Finally Indra too is a beef-eater, for he

22. The form *ad-na-* itself goes back to IE *ed-no-*, where *-no-* is the suffix and *ed-* the common IE root denoting the action of eating; cf. Greek *ed-ō*, Latin *ed-ō*, Armenian *utem*, Gothic *itan*, English *eat*, etc.

23. Hauschild, *op. cit.*, p. 285.

24. H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda* (3rd ed., Berlin, 1923) p. 355.

25. Details in Luke, "Yajna, the Essence of Ancient Aryan Cult," *The Living Word* 81 (1975) pp. 233-59.

boasts to his wife: "They cook (*pacanti*) for me fifteen bullocks (*ukṣino... pancadaśa*) every time, nay twenty (*vimśatim*); I eat (*admi*) their fat" (10:86:14).

At the time of marriage festivals beef was naturally eaten, as we learn from 10 : 85, the long poem that deals with the marriage between Soma and *Sūryā* (feminine). From the tradition of the present hymn the term *sūryā-* came to mean bride,²⁶ and the composition is itself known as *sūryā - sūktam*²⁷. Stanza 13 is of the utmost importance for us: *aghāsu hanyante gāvo* "In aghā days the kine are slain."²⁸ The verb *hanyante*, from the root *han-*, calls for some comment; *han-* goes back to IE *g^when-* (compare the third person plural *ghnanti* in Sanskrit), "to smite, strike," and hence also "to kill, slaughter." Compare Avestan *jainti* (third person singular, "smites"), Greek *theinō*, "to strike, wound," Latin *de-fendō*, "to defend," Hittite, *kuen-*, "to strike, smite, kill," etc. The Vedic poets use the verb to denote the slaying of the serpent, the dragon (1 : 32 : 1-3), the foe, the non-friend (*amitra-*), the *dāsas* and so on, so that in the passage under consideration it must mean slaughter of kine on the occasion of the marriage feast. The Atharvaveda too, in a wedding hymn that embodies a large part of RV 10:85, preserves the clause *maghāsu hanyante gāvah* (14 : 1 : 13), "In maghā days the kine are slain." Aghā and Maghā are names of stars, the former being the earlier form of the name. To say that the passage points only to the driving of cows given as dowry²⁹ is a patent absurdity.

26. Geldner, *op. cit.*, p. 267, n. 2. Incidentally the common IE terms for the sun were *sāwel-* / *sūl-* and *swen-* / *sun-*; the Sanskrit term presupposes the base *sūl-*, and here belong too Latin *sōl*, Greek *hēlios*, Gothic *sauil*, etc., and from the stem with *-n* are derived Gothic *sunno*, English *sun*, etc.

27. Analysis of the poem in Alsdorf, "Bemerkungen zum *Sūryāsūkta*," *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 111 (1961) pp. 492-98.

28. Cf. M. Winternitz, *Das altindische Hochzeitsrituell* (Denkschrift der Oesterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften Nr. 40, Vienna, 1892) p. 33.

29. Such is the view of Sāyana (Geldner, *op. cit.*, p. 269).

A study of the tradition of the epics regarding the use of meat, strictly speaking, is beyond the purview of this article, but since the matter is of some interest for the reader we wish to single out a couple of details.³⁰ King Ratnideva is said to have been in the habit of sacrificing 21,000 cows daily in order to feed his guests (7: 67)! King Nahusa proposed to kill a cow in honour of the god Tvaṣtar in accordance with the injunction of the Vedas (12: 248). There are two other passages of the same tenor, but at the same time there is also clear aversion to killing: some sages tell the gods that the pious cannot adhere to a religion that sanction animal slaughter and destruction of life (12: 338). In conclusion, vegetarianism not at all in keeping with Vedic usage.

Enjoyment of an intoxicating drink called *surā-* (also *sūra-*) was one of the items of daily life in the Vedic age, and what its exact nature was, how it was made, and what its ingredients were we are now not in a position to say. The name is a derivative of the stem *sū-l-*, which in its turn goes back to *seu-*, "to rain, flow, issue forth", its cognates include Greek *hulē*, "mire, clay", Lithuanian *sulà*, "sap flowing from trees", etc.³¹ These cognates do not decisively prove that *surā* was some kind of sap, but in any case it was a drink distinct from soma which could be consumed only at the time of cult. Some of the poets speak of it in favourable terms (1:116:7. 10:131:4f. AV 4:34:6. 10:6:5), while others brand it as an evil along with gambling (7:86:6. AV 7:70:1. 14:1:35f. 15:1:1f.), and disapprove

30. Relevant discussions in E. W. Hopkins, *The Great Epic of India* (Boston, 1901) pp. 377-79.

31. For etymology, cf. H. Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch II* (Indogermanische Bibliothek. II. Reihe: Wörterbücher, Heidelberg, 1970) p. 963. J. B. Hofmann, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Griechischen* (Munich, 1966) p. 383. Cf. too Wackernagel-Debrunner, *op. cit.*, § 687 (p. 858). The drink in question was common in Iran as well, for the Avesta uses the term *hurā-* (with change of *s-* to *h-*, as in *asura-* = *ahura-*); compare, "He shall treat nine godly men to their fill of meat, bread, strong drink (*hurayā*) and wine" (Vid. 14: 17); "He should distribute a large quantity of *hurā* and he should make them drunk..." Afr. 3: 4).

of it (7:86:6. 8:2:12; 21:14). Men were wont to enjoy it when they came together, and naturally there followed at times alterations (8:2:12; 21:14). The Aryans really enjoyed gambling,³² and the after-math of this harmful habit is graphically described by an anonymous gambler in a lament (10:34).

Man, as he, through the senses, comes into close contact with the good things of this life, desires not only to use them to satisfy his needs but also to possess them in abundance; for this gives him a sense of security. Enjoyment alone will not satisfy mortal men, and that is why they yearn to become possessors of things, but this is not an easy matter. In the face of his inability to become a possessor, the individual turns to the powers on high, requesting them to grant him possessions, and we see this clearly in the RV: the Vedic Aryan prayed to the gods for *draviṇa*-, "property, goods, riches", *vasu*-, "bonum, good thing (s)," and especially *rayi*-, "riches, wealth." The first term corresponds to Avestan *draonah*-, "portion one gets as inheritance", but nothing certain can be said about the derivation of the two terms.³³ The next word has as its cognates Hittite *assu*-,³⁴ Greek *eus* (also *êus*), Avestan *vohu*- and *vanhu*-,³⁵ etc., all these forms going back to the base *wes*-, "to be bright, lightsome, luminous," and hence also "to be good." The last term, *rayi*- (also *rai*-) is related to Latin *rēs*, "thing, possession", and both the words presuppose the base *reHi*- (in the case of the verb *reH*-).³⁶ Avestan attests the adjectival forms *raēvant*- (= sanskrit *rēvant*-), "rich majestic," and *raēvastāma*-, "very rich".

32. On gambling in the Vedic age, cf. A. A. Macdonell-A. B. Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects* I (Delhi, 1967) pp. 2-5. In Sanskrit the dice is called *akṣa*-, "that which is provided with eye (s)", "from *akṣi*-, "eye" (= Avestan *asi*-, Latin *oculus*, Greek *osse*, Hittite *akessar*-, etc.).

33. Mayrhofer, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

34. In Hittite *assu*- is used as adjective ("good, useful, beneficial, pleasing"), adverb (well"), noun ("goods, possession, welfare, wellbeing") and exclamation ("hail!").

35. For the tradition of the Avesta, cf. C. Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch* (repr., Berlin, 1960) cols. 1395-99.

36. Cf. T. Burrow, *The Sanskrit Language* (London, 1965) pp. 178, 245.

Understandably enough, the good things the pious folk were regularly praying for were long life, a large progeny, possession of as many cows and horses as possible, victory over foes, and the like. In the body of a Vedic hymn one can generally distinguish a descriptive and a supplicatory level,³⁷ the former concerned with the glorification of the gods and the latter with the favours the pious man wishes to obtain from above. The supplicatory level, then, puts before us in black and white the Vedic Aryans vis-à-vis terrestrial realities. They desire to possess them hundredfold, nay even thousandfold: "O Indu,³⁸ bring us wealth in steeds and cattle hundredfold; bring wealth, O Soma, thousandfold" (9:67:6); "For you yourself, O Indu, god, to every mortal worshipper, attract riches thousandfold, made manifest in hundred forms" (9:98:4). The pious man with whom Agni is pleased "gains abundant wealth with sons and horses, with heroes, and with kine for his well-being" (5:4:11).

Long life was a thing that every worshipper was wont to pray for: "...You we extol, enjoying through your favour life long and joyful..." (1:53:11). "May I, enjoying lengthened life, still seeing, enter old age as it were the house I live in" (1:116:25). Deliverance from foes is another good the Aryans were requesting of their gods: "Lord of all, from near, from far, ... protect us from sinful men..." (1:27:3); "Preserve us, Agni, from the fiend, preserve us from malicious wrong. Save us from him who fain would injure us or slay... Smite down as with a club, you who have fire for teeth, smite the wicked right and left. Let not the man who plots against us in the night, nor any foe prevail over us" (1:36:15 f.). In conclusion, asceticism, life-negation, *fuga mundi*, etc., were altogether alien to the genius of the Vedic people who, though by no means Epicureans or hedonists, were men eager to enjoy as much as possible the good things of this life.

37. Details in Luke, "Prayer in the R̥gveda: its Nature", *God's Word among Men. Papers in Honour of Fr. Putz S. J., ...* (Delhi, 1973) pp. 231-46.

38. In Sanskrit *indu*- means both "moon" and "drop"; there is nothing unusual if a poet personifies the soma drops, visualizes them as the moon, and prays to them for blessings. A reference to the name Indra is not to be excluded.

The idea of the future in the RV is highly illustrative of the sages' outlook on terrestrial realities: the departed went to the world of the gods and manes, there to continue enjoying the *joie de vivre*, the *dolce vita*, which they have been eagerly seeking here on earth. The world of the dead is ruled by Yama (10:14 : 1)³⁹, the king who is seated under a tree, listening to music played by singers (10:135:1). Those who have reached Yama's realm of bliss enjoy pressed juices, sitting on grass (10:15:3),⁴⁰ and they take part too in the soma banquet (10:15:8). The following words addressed to the dead man who is going to be cremated admirably recapitulate the pious man's hopes for the future, and by implication also his vision of the ideal form of life here on earth: "Go forth, go forth upon the ancient paths—ways whereon our sires of old have gone before us. There shall you look on both the kings enjoying their sacred food, god Varuna and Yama. Meet Yama, meet the fathers, meet the merit of free or ordered acts, in highest heaven. Leave sin and evil, seek anew your dwelling, and bright with glory wear another body. Go hence, depart, fly in all directions: this place for him the fathers have provided. Yama bestows on him a place to rest in, adorned with days and beams of light and waters" (10 : 14 : 7-9).

Those who uttered the prayers cited above were doubtless men who had a positive outlook on life and terrestrial realities, and whose zest for life was not hampered by such horror-inspiring dogmas as *samsāra*,⁴¹ and so on; the this-worldliness of the Vedic poets is certainly something most fascinating.

39. The *Avesta* too takes for granted that Yima is the ruler of the world of the dead (cf. n. 5 above).

40. The poet combines here the tradition of the sacrifice to the manes with that of the soma sacrifice (compare v. 8 of the present hymn).

41. On this belief, cf. A. M. Boyer, "Etude sur k' origine de la doctrine du *samsāra*," *Journal Asiatique* 9/ 18 (1901) pp. 451-99; cf. too F. Edgerton, "The Upaniṣads, What do they Seek and Why?" *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 49 (1929) pp. 97-121; "Dominant Ideas in the Formation of Indian Culture," *ibid.* 62 (1942) pp. 151-56.

II

Coming now to the sacred writings of Iran, we say that distinction must be made between the Gāthās of the great prophet of Iran,⁴² and the later sections of the Avesta. We are here concerned primarily with the teachings of the Gāthās, but in order to illustrate the thought of the other sections we add here Vidēvdāt 3:31-33 which purports to be the answer to the question regarding the true essence of Zoroastrianism. "Essence" is the rendering of *uruthwan-* (also *uruthwar-*), literally, "belly, abdomen, viscera," and metaphorically, "what is within, kernel, essence."⁴³ The one who asks the question is Zarathushtra and the one who answers Ahura Mazdāh, "the Wise Lord" (God); according to the context, then, 3:31-33 is a revelation regarding the very core of the Zoroastrian faith.

The revelatory word runs thus: "He who sows corn, sows holiness: he makes the law of Mazdāh grow higher and higher: he makes the law of Mazdāh as fat as he can with acts of adoration, a thousand oblations, ten thousand sacrifices. When barley is coming forth, the Daēvas⁴⁴ start up; when corn is growing rank, then faint the Daēvas' hearts; when corn is being ground, the Daēvas groan; when wheat is coming forth, the Daēvas are destroyed. In that house they can no longer stay, from that house they are beaten away, wherein wheat is thus coming forth. It is as though red hot iron were turned about in their throats, when there is plenty of corn.... No one who does not eat, has strength to do works of holiness, strength to do works of husbandry, strength to beget children. By eating every material creature lives, by not eating it dies away." As a definition of religion this passage is unique: the pious man is he who by his labour brings about an increase of the means of sustenance

42. For a brief orientation, cf. Luke, "The Tragedy of Freedom: Man in the Thought of Zarathushtra," *Jeevadhara* 26 (1975) pp. 148-62.

43. Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, cols. 1531f.

44. That is, the devas; be it noted that in Iran the devas are the demons and the asuras (in Iranian the ahuras) the gods, and the ahura par excellence is Ahura Mazdāh, "the Wise Lord," who is the true God and creator.

here on earth, and hereby he even causes the destruction of the principle of evil.

The opening statement, in the original *yō yaom kārāyeiti ho asəm kārāyeiti*, calls for some comment. The second word in the text is the accusative singular of *yava-*, "corn," a term occurring also in the RV,⁴⁵ and the grain thus called used to be cultivated by tillers of the land as staple food. The third word is the verb, an interative present third person singular, from the root *kar-*, "to scatter, spread out," and hence also "to plough. plant." Avestan attests too the verb *karsaiti* (= Sanskrit *karṣati*), from *kars-*, "to make furrows, plough"; a derivative of this root occurs too in the preceding verse.⁴⁶

In the translation cited here *asəm* (accusative singular of *asa-*) is rendered "holiness," which is really unfortunate, since the word means "truth." To start with, let it be noted that the present term corresponds to Sanskrit *ṛta-*, one of the keywords of the first Veda, whose meaning has been studied in an exhaustive fashion by the famous German Indologist Heinrich Lüders.⁴⁷ Compare the following statement where *satyam*, "truth," occurs as the antonym of *anṛtam*, "non-ṛtam": *satyam vakṣyāmi na-anṛtam* (4: 9: 7), "I will speak the truth, and not falsehood." Or again, it is said that king Varuṇa *satya-anṛte avapaśyan janānām* (7: 49: 3), "sees the truth and falsehood of man." That the Iranians understood *asa-* as truth is clear from the testimony of Plutarch, who employs as its equivalent the well-known Greek term *alētheia*, "truth." A dogmatic concept of the Avesta, truth, often followed by *vanhu-*, "good," and *vahista-*, "best," signifies what is true in opposition to what is false, i.e., to *drug*⁴⁸ "the

45. Macdonell-Keith, *op. cit.* II, p. 187.

46. Mayrhofer, *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen* I (Indogermanische Bibliothek..., Heidelberg, 1953) p. 176.

47. This is done in his great work, published posthumously by Alsdorf. *Varuṇa* I-II (Göttingen, 1951-58); cf. too Thieme's review of the second volume, *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 113 (1963) pp. 683-94.

48. Etymologically related to Sanskrit *druha-*, *droha-*, "hurt, harm," Old High German *triogan*, Modern German *trügen*, "to cheat, deceive," etc. (cf. Luke, *op. cit.*, p. 152, n. 18).

lie, falsehood"; it means everything that is connected with the true God and his kingdom. What the passage cited above says is that the person who engages in agriculture and produces much grain contributes to the establishment of God's rule here on earth, and to the elimination of the principle of evil represented by the Daēvas or demons.

We shall now pass on to the Gāthās which embody earlier traditions, and which, from the religious point of view, towers head and shoulders above the poems of the RV; as J. C. Tavadia, the Bombay Parsee scholar has pointed out, the Gāthās "sind ihm (RV) aber ihrem Kern nach, d. h. im religiösen Gehalt weit überlegen."⁴⁹ The most remarkable thing about the poetical compositions of the prophet of Iran is that they embody a veritable, non-mythical, theistic idea of creation, which has no strict and proper parallel in the Vedas, and which unfortunately is known only to the narrow circles of specialists. The doctrine of creation is admirably set forth in Yasna 44, a poem that records the questions Zarathushtra asked his God, and consists of twenty stanzas, each of which, with the sole exception of the last, is introduced by the formula *tat thwā pərəsā ərəs mōi vaocā ahurā*, "This do I ask thee tell me truly O Ahura." The stanzas that are relevant are 3-7; in what follows we shall cite them with brief comments on the more important expressions in order to bring out their literal sense and theological richness.⁵⁰

49. The remark occurs in his article "Zur Interpretation der Gatha des Zarathustra," *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 100 (1950) p. 208.

50. Detailed study of the problem is Gnoli, "Osservazioni sulla dottrina mazdaica della creazione," *AION* N. S. 13 (1963) pp. 163-93 (deals with Yasna 44:3-7 and Bundahishn). M. Mole, "La naissance du monde dans l'Iran preislamique," *La naissance du monde* (Sources orientales 1, Paris, 1959) pp. 316-26. Reference may also be made to A. J. Carnoy, "Iranian View of Origins in Connection with Similar Babylonian Beliefs," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 38 (1917) pp. 300-20. J. Darmsteter, "Les cosmogonies aryennes," *Essais Orientaux* (Paris, 1883) pp. 171-207.

“This do I ask thee, tell me truly O Ahura. What being (was), by creation, the original sire of truth? What being established the path of the sun and of the stars? Who (is he) through whom the moon (now) waxes, now wanes? Both these, O wise one, and other things do I wish to know” (v. 3). “What being:” *kasnā*, the special Gāthic form of the interrogative pronoun *kas-*, from IE *k^wo-*, and related to Sanskrit *kas-*, Latin *quī* and *quis*, Greek *po-* and *tis*, etc. “By creation:” *zathā* (*a* is to be nasalized in pronunciation), instrumental form of the noun *zatha-*, “birth, generation, creation,” from the base *zan-*, “to bring forth, give birth to,” which goes back to IE *g^{en}-*;⁵¹ from among its derivatives we may mention Latin *gignō*, Greek *gignomai*, Sanskrit *jajanti*, etc. “Original sire”: *patā*, from *pati-* (*paiti-*), “master, lord, ruler, husband,” used in the present text in the sense of “creator”. This substantive goes back to the IE form *poti-s-*, which survives unchanged in Old Latin (cf. *potis sum*); here belong too Greek *posis*, “husband” (cf. too the feminine form *potnia* = Sanskrit *patnī-*, “lady, wife”), Sanskrit *pati-*, etc.

“This do I ask.... What being set firmly both the earth from below and the sky, (to keep them) from falling? Who (created) the waters and the plants? What being yoked swiftness to the wind and to the clouds? What being (was), through wisdom, the creator of good purpose” (v. 4)? “Through wisdom”: *mazdā*, instrumental of *mazdāh-*, the aspect of wisdom of the personal God Ahura Mazdāh; the word is etymologically related to Sanskrit *medhā-*, “memory,” etc. “Creator:” *damis* (*a* is nasal); compare *dāmi-dāt-*, “creating the creation” (creator of the creation), and *dāmi-dāta-*, “created by the creator.” The expressions are all from the root *dā-* (= Sanskrit *dhā-*) “to set, place, put, “from IE *dhē-* whose derivatives include Greek *ti-thē-mi*, Latin *fa-iō* (with the extension *-k-*) and *dere* in *condere*, *abdere* Hittite *da-a-ai-*, etc.; cf. Sanskrit *dhātār-* = Avestan *dātar-*, Latin *con-ditor*, and Greek *thetēr* (“founder”).

“This do I ask... What artificer created both light and darkness? What artificer created both sleeping and waking? Who

51. Cf. n. 7 above.

(is he) by whom (were made) dawn, noon and night, which (are) reminders to the wise men of duty" (v. 5)? "Artificer": *hvāpa*, to be analysed as *hv-* (from *hu-* = Sanskrit *su-*) plus *āpah-* (= Sanskrit *āpas-* = Latin *opus*, from *opos*), "working well, creating well"; cf. Sanskrit *svāpas-*, "doing well, active, industrious." "Created": *dāt*, from *dā-* discussed above.

"This do I ask... The things which I am to declare, if thus (they are) in truth, let piety support justice by deeds, let it teach thy dominion through good purpose. For whom hast thou created the pregnant, luck-bringing cow" (v. 6)? The reference to the cow in the present stanza may sound strange to the modern reader, who may even be tempted to ask whether the prophet of Iran was a cow-worshipper. While he never considered the bovine species sacred and holy, he was very particular that men should care for it, and also condemned the custom prevalent among his contemporaries of sacrificing it in large numbers. Aryan cult included the sacrifice of bulls and cows, and the consuming of the animals' flesh together with the drinking of the large quantities of soma (Avestan haoma), the intoxicating liquor which used to be regarded as the elixir of immortality.⁵² The prophet's desire to safeguard his followers from

52. On the religious significance of soma/hamoa, cf. Luke, "Yajna, the Essence of Ancient Aryan Cult," *The Living Word* 81 (1975) pp. 233-59. We may note here in passing that the suggestion has been made that soma was not a fermented drink but rather a hallucinogenic drug obtained from fly-agaric, a species of mushroom known in technical language as *amanita muscaria*; this mushroom was first dried, then soaked in water and afterwards squeezed so as to make it yield an intoxicating juice, which used to be mixed with beverages and consumed. Such is the thesis of R. G. Wasson, *Soma: Divine Mushroom of Immortality* (New York, 1968); "The Soma of the Rig-Veda, What was it?" *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 91 (1971) pp. 169-87. The probability of this new understanding of the nature of soma has been conceded by D. H. H. Inghalls, "Remarks on Wasson's Soma," *ibid.*, pp. 188-91, and F. B. J. Kuiper, in his review of Wasson's monograph, in *Indo-Iranian Journal* 12 (1970) pp. 279-85. It has been rejected outright by J. Brough, "Soma and Amanita Muscaria," *Bulletin of the School*

a common and widespread superstition (or rather abuse) stands in the rear of his mention of the cow.

“This do I ask... Who created treasured piety, together with power? Who with wide perception, made the son respectful to the father? By these (questions) I strive to lean to know thee, O wise one, (as) the creator of all things through (thy) beneficent spirit” (v. 7).⁵³ “Creator of all things: *vīspanam* (a before *m* to be nasalized in pronunciation) *dātāyōm*. Avestan *vīspa-*, “all, every, whole, entire,” corresponds to Sanskrit *viśva-*, Lithuanian *visas*, Latvian *viss*, Old Prussian *wissa*, etc., “all.” The second word is the accusative singular of *dātar-*, “creator,” mentioned in the notes on stanza 4.

The idea of creation in Yasna 44:3-7 is quite unique, coming very close to that of the Bible, so much so that as one reads through the text one almost gets the feeling that some Israelite prophet is speaking! There are too other passages which are equally significant; compare the following statement where the work of creation is attributed to God’s activity of thought: “He who as primal being thus thought to himself: ‘Let the blissful places be filled with light’ – he, by an act of will was the creator of truth...” (Yasna 31:7). “Primal being:” *paouruuyō*, corresponding exactly to Sanskrit *pūrva-*, “first, former, ancient;” the creator is pictured here as the ancient one, i. e., as the one who was from hoary antiquity, nay, from eternity. “Thought”: *mantā*, from the root *man-* (IE *men-*), “to think, consider, suppose, reflect,” and so on.⁵⁴

of *Oriental and African Studies* 34 (1971) pp. 331–62; Wasson has replied to the criticisms in his monograph *Soma and Flyagaric: Rejoinder to Professor Brough* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972).

53. The “beneficent spirit,” or the “holy spirit,” is called in Avestan *spenta mainyu-*; the latter term corresponds to Sanskrit *manyu-* (cf. n. 10 above) and the former to Old Slavic *sve(n)tu*, “hoiy,” and Lithuanian *sventas*, id.; the term is best rendered “strong, supernaturally powerful,” etc. (cf. H. W. Baily, “Iranian Studies III,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 7 [1934] pp. 275–98, where complete list of cognates in Iranian and Balto-Slavic are given).

54. Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, cols. 1121–24.

Yasna 31:11 is most significant inasmuch as it describes the creation of man as a free being: "... in the beginning thou didst create both material objects⁵⁵ and consciences... so that he who wills may give practical proof of his convictions." "Conscience": *daēnā*-, a technical term which has such meanings as "religion, self, personality", but etymologically it stands for insight, inner knowledge; the root from which it is derived, *dā(y)*-, "to see, look at" (cf. the noun *daēman*-, "sight, eye," formed from it), is a cognate of Sanskrit *dīdheti*, *dīdhye*, etc., "to perceive, think, reflect." The verb in Avestan denoting the idea of free choice is *var*-, "to select, choose, prefer," which is etymologically related to Sanskrit *vr̥ṇīte*, Latin *volō*, etc. The last three words of the text of Yasna 31:11 are, in the original, *varənan̄g vasā dāyetē*, "(damit man) nach seinem Willen seine Ueberzeugungen betätige,"⁵⁶ i. e., so that one may, according to his *vasah*- (noun from *vas*-, "to wish, will"), exercise his *varəna*- (substantive from *var*-, the root just mentioned). Man is, then, created free, which means that freewill is the creator's greatest gift to him, and all the good things of this world are put at his disposal.

The world of creation, according to Zarathushtra, is the concrete outcome of a thought-activity exercised by the one and the unique God, and the special goal he had in mind as he brought things into being is that man be able to choose the truth in freedom.⁵⁷ Terrestrial realities have therefore an important part to play in man's life here on earth, in the sense that they have positively to help him to exercise his freedom by choosing the truth and warding off the lie.

A few words may be added here about the Iranian prophet's idea of the next life. He calls paradise "house of song": compare his statement, "Let us offer him hymns of praise

55. In the original *gaēthās*-, from the base *goy*-, "to live" (= Sanskrit *jīv*-, *jīvati*); the *gaētha*- is therefore the living thing, the living being, and when used with the adjective *vispa*- (= Sanskrit *viśva*-), it denotes the material world, including too mankind (Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, cols. 476ff.)

56. Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, col. 1371.

57. Luke, "Tragedy," pp. 154-58.

*dāmānə garō*⁵⁸ in the house of song” (Yasna 45:8). It is said too that Ahura Mazdāh has come, with the reward that Zarathustra had promised to the faithful ones, to *garō dāmānə* (Yasna 51:15), “the house of song.” This house is the Lord’s own, and hence the expressions “his house of song,” and simply “his house” (Yasna 45:8–10); it is also called “the blessed dwelling” (*husitois*) of the Good Mind, the Lord and the Truth (Yasna 30:10).

Paradise is lightsome and luminous: the state of bliss of those who have reached it is described as joy which they shall apprehend *raocabis*⁵⁹ (Yasna 30:1), “lūcibus, through light” (literally lights). Ahura Mazdāh has himself “filled the blessed spaces with light” (Yasna 31:7). This bliss in the region of light involves long life (Yasna 43:2), and mention is made of the long duration of priceless existence (Yasna 43:13); we hear too the prayer the prophet addresses to his God to grant him “all the good (things of) life that have been, that are, or that shall be” (Yasna 33:10). In one text there is reference to the nourishment, but what is meant is something wholly spiritual: “*haurvascā* (wholesomeness)⁶⁰ and *aməratatscā* (immortality)⁶¹ (which are) your (gifts), shall be for nourishment” (Yasna 34:11).

Terrestrial realities are not the constitutive elements of bliss but only its symbols. For the sake of the non-specialist we

58. The first word, corresponding to Sanskrit *dhāman-*, “abode, dwelling,” has in the Gāthās an eschatological nuance (Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, col. 434); the second term, related to Sanskrit *grṇati*, “sings, “means” song, praise, song of praise,” and the combination cited in the text serves as designation of God’s abode; compare “And to him shall we lay down praises in the house of song” (Yasna 45:8).

59. In Sanskrit *rocibhis*; Avestan *raocah-* (= Sanskrit *rocas-*) goes back to the IE base *leuk-*, from among whose derivatives we may cite Greek *leukos*, “white, clear,” *leussō*, “to look,” Latin *lūx*, *lūcēre*, Gothic *liuhath*, “light,” etc.

60. Iranian *haurva-* is the same as Sanskrit *sarva-*, from IE *sōlo-*, *sol(e)wo-*; cf. Greek *holos*, and Latin *salvus*, *solidus*, etc.

61. In Sanskrit *amṛta-*, “non-death, immortality; on the term, cf. Thieme, *Studien zur indogermanischen Wortkunde und Religionschichte* (Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philol. hist. Klasse 98:5, Berlin, 1952) pp. 15–34.

would like to add that according to Zarathushtra bliss consists in the vision of God: “*thwā darə- sānī*”⁶² I shall see you through the Truth and Good Mind, as one possessed of knowledge and the throne of lordship” (Yasna 28: 5). Vision is also fellowship: “Grant...., I pray you, O Mazdāh Ahura *urvāzistam*”⁶³ with the Truth.... in your kingdom” (Yasna 49: 8). The attainment of *urvazista-*, “communion, fellowship” is unthinkable apart from the realities of this world.

.....

It will be a patent anachronism to speak of a theology of terrestrial realities in the RV: in fact the sacred books of India do not include any account that may be regarded as a strict parallel to Gen. 1. However, the poets of the Vedic age, being men with an unbounded zest for life and its fruition, were in some sense like the people of Israel! The Aryans knew that everything good came from the powers on high, incessantly prayed for them, and also enjoyed to the full everything they had at their disposal. This enjoyment of life went hand in hand with sentiments of gratitude to the gods, so that it is right to say that the Vedic Aryans’ attitude to terrestrial realities ever remained God-oriented.

The Avesta, however, embodies a veritable theology of terrestrial realities which comes very close to that of the biblical accounts of creation. It is monstrous to argue, as it has been

62. From the verbal root *dar-s-*, “to see, view, look at,” related to Sanskrit *darś* (cf. the perfect *dadarśa* = Greek *dedroka*); the IE base is *der-k’-*, which survives in Greek *derk-o-mai* and Gothic *tarh-jan*, “to view.” We must not fail to recall here that the idea of the vision of God in Zarathushtra’s preaching is something that has no proper parallel in the religious literature of the Indo-Aryans. The great prophet and reformer of Iran has in point of fact anticipated the Christian doctrine regarding the vision, immediate and direct, of God in heaven.

63. The superlative of *urvāz-*, “happy, glad, joyful;” there is too the verbal base *urvāz-*, “laetari, to rejoice,” from *urvād-* with the extension *-s-* (final *-z-* representing *-dzh-*). Rejoicing in heaven in the company of such entities as Truth, Good Mind, and so on, is reminiscent of the Christian idea of the life in heaven as fellowship with God and the saints.

done at times,⁶⁴ that the Zoroastrian scriptures are dependent upon the Bible;⁶⁵ on the contrary, it represents an original and creative insight of the religious genius of the Aryans as it evolved and reached maturity in ancient Iran.

Because terrestrial realities do possess an intrinsic value and worth, Zarathushtra "suggests no renunciation, he preaches the maintenance of life."⁶⁶ The faith that he announced did not turn his followers away from the world, and from action, including too the full enjoyment of everything good. "No vows of chastity and poverty with the Parsees!"⁶⁷ And if the Parsees, in spite of their numerical insignificance, spend more money on philanthropic activity than the Hindu, Moslem and Christian communities taken, of course, individually, it is because they, following the teaching of their prophet, attach a positive value to terrestrial realities.

Calvary, Trichur-680004
Kerala, India

K. Luke

64. In the last century the great Iranist F. Spiegel postulated Judaism's influence upon Parsism in his study, "Der Einfluss des Semitismus auf das Avests, *Arische Studien* I (Leipzig, (1874) pp. 45-61; this theory was revived by R. Pettazzoni, *La religione di Zarathustra* (Rome, 1920).

65. The fact is, the OT depends in all likelihood on the religion of Iran (cf. Luke, "Time in the Perspective of Jewish Apocalyptic," *Jeevadharma* 7 [1977] p. 140).

66. J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *The Hymns of Zarathustra* (Beacon paperback, Boston, 1963) p. 160.

67. Duchesne-Guillemin, *op. cit.*, p. 161. We must not, in this connection, fail to recall here that it was the Parsee community that first ventured upon the plan of industrializing India, and it was only later that Hindu tycoons came to realize the importance of largescale industries.

68. It is a public secret in India that of all the industrial magnates in the country it is the Tatas (a Parsee family) who mete out to their employees the most humane and gentlemanly treatment! A last remark we would like to make concerns the hundreds of gurujis, swamis, yogis and others who are going to the western countries to impart spiritual enlightenment to the people dwelling in ignorance and darkness there. The thing that is most understandable is, why do they not bother to do something for the millions of their own brothers and sisters in India who live a subhuman life and observe or perpetual fast? One of the most patent absurdities is that so many spiritual men who are so eager to help the people of the West are utterly unaware of the sufferings of their fellow-citizens.

Book Reviews

Karl Jarosch, *Sichem. Eine archäologische und religionsgeschichtliche Studie mit besonderer Berücksichtigung von Jos 24* (Orbis biblicus et orientalis 11), Universitätsverlag, Freiburg/Schweiz/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1976; pp. 280 (pp. 191–279, 193 ills.)

The doctoral dissertation of Fr. Jarosch, *Die Stellung des Elohisten zur kanaanäischen Religion* (Orbis . . . 4, Freiburg–Göttingen, 1974) was reviewed in the biblical issue of *Jeevadhara* 1976; it was then pointed out that the work continued the tradition of eminent scholarship for which the German-speaking countries are justly famous, and the remark was also made that the book was of the greatest importance for the mission countries where the preacher of the gospel has to take into account the local culture. The new book of Dr. Jarosch under review is his *Habilitationsschrift*, the dissertation he has written to be promoted to the rank of University professor, and this work too is a monument to German *Wissenschaft*.

The book is an exhaustive discussion of the numerous problems connected with the city of Shechem or more specifically with Jos. 24. Dr. Jarosch approaches the chapter from the point of view of archaeology and the history of religions; this is the time-honoured method of approach in use among biblical scholars, a method which the structural approach is not able to replace or supplant. This means that the author submits the biblical text to the most minute and elaborate analysis, with of course constant reference to all the relevant publications. The book has five chapters and comes to a close with the list of abbreviations (pp. 155–60), bibliography (pp. 161–81), index of important biblical texts (pp. 183–84), and catalogue of illustrations (pp. 191–279); the illustrations – there are 193 of them – have, we wish to emphasize, come out very well.

Coming to the book itself, Chapter I (pp. 11–66) deals in detail with the archaeological work done over a period of sixty years (1903–73) at Shechem and in its vicinity. The oldest find

from Shechem is a flint axe Palaeolithic Age, but regular occupation began only in the Chalcolithic Age, and the site has ever since remained one of the important centres of Palestine. In this brief review it is not possible to give the reader some idea of the grandiose synthesis found in the opening chapter.

Chapter II (pp. 67-98) examines the various biblical texts dealing with Shechem (excluding of course Jos. 24). There are first of all passages scattered here and there which depict Shechem as the socio-religious centre of the Jacob-Joseph-Israel tribes; then there is Jdg. 9 recording the story of Abimelek's kingship at Shechem; at times the city is a place of asylum, and finally there is the account of the revolt of the northern tribes against the Davidite dynasty (1 Kg. 12). All these texts are minutely analysed by the author. Chapter III (pp. 99-106) lists the various references to Shechem in extra-biblical sources, and Chapter IV (pp. 109-27) offers a synthesis of the research so far done on Jos. 24; the author judiciously evaluates the different views proposed by specialists.

Chapter V (pp. 129-53), the central part of Dr. Jarosch' work, analyses in depth Jos. 24. The textual problem connected with the story in this chapter of the book of Joshua, inasmuch as the Septuagint and some minor witnesses attest the reading Shilo instead of Shechem; the author shows that the tradition of the Hebrew text is to be preferred (pp. 129-31), after which he discusses, *inter alia*, Martin Noth's theory of the amphictyony, but only to reject it with weighty arguments (pp. 133-36). Objections are also raised against the special views of L. Perlitt, *Bundestheologie im Alten Testament* (Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 36, [Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1969] pp. 239-84) who has tried to blaze new trails (pp. 136-39). Now there follows the author's own "Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung" (pp. 139-53), where he comes to the conclusion that Shechem never had any great significance for Yahwism, inasmuch as it was only a mere provincial centre of the Jacob-Israel and Joseph-Joshua cycles. However, Jos. 24 has its own historical significance, which is recapitulated as follows by Dr. Jarosch: "Der Jahwismus im Kulturland wird grundgelegt durch den eidlichen Abschluss einer confederation zwischen Josua (Josef) und Jacob/Israel. Die politischen Bedingungen dieser confederation

sind mit der Zeit vergangen und nicht mehr aktuell gewesen. Die konföderativen Stämme wurden allmählich ein Volk."

Sichem is a most highly original monograph which must have its place on the shelf of every professor of the OT. Needless to say, the book is not meant for beginners; it is addressed to the specialist who, I can say from personal experience, will feel quite enriched when he has carefully gone through it.

K. Luke

Karl Jarosch-Marianne Leimlehner-Grete Swedik, *Aegypten und Vorderasien. Eine kleine Chronographie bis zum Auftreten Alexander des Grossen* (Veritas-Verlag, Linz-Wien-Passau-KBW Verlag, Stuttgart, 1976). Pp. 160, 4 maps, 45 ills.

For a full understanding of the OT it is necessary that our students have a close acquaintance with the history and culture of the Fertile Crescent, and there are too excellent works dealing with this special field. There are the massive tomes of *The Cambridge Ancient History* I-II (in four parts; 3rd ed., Cambridge, 1971-76) which, however, are not meant to be used as manuals. The well-known volumes of Scharff-Moortgat and Schmökel too cannot be used as textbooks; Wiseman's *peoples of the Old Testament* and Noth's *Old Testament World* are excellent works, but they too are not suited for the class room. The reviewer is not unaware that there are popular works of synthesis, but they too suffer from serious limitations; one will look in vain for some solid information on the Uartians, for example, in Moscati's *Face of the Ancient Orient*.

The book under review, written by Dr. Jarosch in collaboration with two of his students, is the ideal type of book that the busy professor of the OT who has no interest in professional Orientalistics will always like to have at hand for ready reference and immediate use. The work is popular, so that it can with the utmost ease be used by any student, provided of course he knows German. The maps of the ancient Orient (pp. 162-65) as well as the numerous illustrations (pp. 168-206, nos. 1-45) render the work all the more valuable. The treatment of the general oriental

background of the Bible is comprehensive, inasmuch as both Egypt and Western Asia are discussed briefly.

Chapter I (pp. 9-14) deals with the prehistory of the Fertile Crescent and Chapter II (pp. 15-50) with the history of the same from the end of the fourth millennium to the middle of the second; the first half of the chapter recounts the history of Egypt from the prehistoric Age down to the second Intermediary Period, and the second half that of Mesopotamia from the age of the Sumerians down to the beginning of the Cassite age in Babylon. In the matter of Mesopotamian chronology Dr. Jarosch shows his preference for the "high" chronology, assigning Hammurapi to about 1792-50 B. C. The Arabs, the Hittites, the Hurrians and the Canaanites too figure in the discussions-

Chapter III (pp. 51-99) surveys the history of the second half of the second millennium, and comes to a close with a brief account of Israel's prehistory (pp. 79-99). The antecedents of the historical entity known by the name Israel include an Amorite and Proto-Aramaeon component, and once this is taken into account the traditions regarding the patriarchs become quite understandable. The name Abram / Abraham, for instance, is a variant of *Abīramu*, "My Father is Exalted," or "The Father is Exalted," and the nomenclature of the patriarchal age does point to the linguistic change from Amorite to Canaanite. Special reference is made to the data furnished by the Nuzi texts, and the question of the sojourn in Egypt is also discussed: only the Joseph clan was in Egypt.

Chapter IV (pp. 100-157) covers the history of the first millennium down to the time of Alexander's conquest of the East, and in the present chapter too the history of Israel is discussed in some detail (pp. 132-57). The survey comes to a close with the account of the Jewish community's restoration after the exile. Dr. Jarosch is of the view that Nehemiah came to Palestine in 445 and Ezra in 433.

A unique feature of the present work is the series of chronological charts at the end of each section, which are a great help to students and teachers alike, for only when one has clear notions about dates will one be in a position to have a

true grasp of history. *Aegypten und Vorderasien* is a must for all serious students of the OT. Within its 150 pages or so, it offers the reader a wealth of up-to-date information, which it is virtually impossible to find elsewhere. As a succinct introduction to the historical background of the OT the book here reviewed is a veritable masterpiece, and let us hope that it will soon be translated into English.

K. Luke

Karl Hoffmann, *Aufsätze zur Indoiranistik* herausgegeben von Johann Narten. Band I (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1975). pp. VIII-338; with frontispiece.

On the occasion of the sixtieth birth of Prof. Karl Hoffmann his students, friends and colleagues have thought it opportune to bring out in two volumes his articles and notes scattered here and there in highly specialized periodicals. Prof. Hoffmann, who is an expert in Indo-European philology, is equally competent in the fields of Indology and Iranistics, and is at present working on the final volume of Wackernagel's monumental *Altindische Grammatik*, the volume dealing with verbs.

Aufsätze I contains thirty-seven contributions of Prof. Hoffmann, most of which are in German and the rest in English, the earliest of them dating from 1940/41. Contribution no. 11 (pp. 130-37) is a detailed review of the new edition of the first volume of Wackernagel's grammar, with Renou's "Introduction generale" and Debrunner's "Nachträge," as well as of the two halves of the second volume of the same work. Needless to say, all the studies are of highly technical nature, addressed to the specialist, and not to the dilettante or the beginner; this is particularly the case with the discussions on Sanskrit, Old Persian, Avestan and Hittite roots and words.

From among the *Aufsätze* the following may be singled out. The first "Zu den indischen Namen beim Geographen von Ravenna" (pp. 1-5) identifies some of the names occurring in ancient work on geography; the place names in Latin and Greek are at times so changed that identification is virtually impossible. The second contribution, "Vedische Namen" (pp.

6-28) deals with the proper names Kaurama, Kaśū, and Kanva, and since several Vedic texts are cited and discussed, the contribution is of the utmost importance to the interpreter of the Vedas. "Wiederholende Onomatopoetika im Altindischen" (pp. 35-45) is concerned with a number of onomatopoetic words in the Samhitās. "Bemerkungen zur vedischen Kosmologie" (pp. 46-51) discusses some of the special interpretations proposed by Heinrich Lüders in his great work on Varuna. "Textkritisches zum Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa" (pp. 77-112) is a major contribution which naturally is also most technical, and is of moment for the exegete of the Vedic texts; this is also the case with "Die Komposition eines Brāhmaṇa-Abschnittes (MS. 1: 10, 14-16)" (pp. 207-20). Lastly mention must be made of "Remarks on the New Edition of the Paippālada-Samhitā" (pp. 228-37).

Iranistics is also well represented in the present volume. "Altiranisch" (pp. 58-76) is a succinct grammatical and historical introduction to the language of the Avesta and the Old Persian inscriptions. There are studies concerned exclusively with the interpretation of Avestan texts and the textual criticism of the Avesta, but mentioning them here may not be necessary since most readers are not familiar with Zoroastrian scriptures. The second volume of Hoffmann's *Aufsätze* will contain the index verborum which, will greatly facilitate the use of this major work, which we must add, is indispensable for the Christian scholar in India. The Gospel has to be Indian to the Indians, Chinese to the Chinese, and so on, and a genuinely Indian expression of the Christian faith is unthinkable apart from a full acquaintance with scientific Indology. And if Indological publications by Indian Christian scholars are often found wanting, it is because of their failure to make use of the works of professional Indologists like Prof. Hoffmann. This reviewer has never seen a reference to Hoffmann in Indian publications!

K. Luke

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